“Are You Listening?”: Vocal Polyphony in the Christian Rock Music of Emery

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Abstract

To many, the inception of Christian rock threatened the moral and religious stability of America due to its ties to rock and roll. Preachers and religious leaders spoke out against this combination of the "music of the devil" and gospel-proclaiming lyrics. Though the subgenre was gradually more accepted over time, Christian musicians faced a new challenge when they realized they had isolated themselves from a wider audience by occupying the "gospel" and "worship" sections of the record store. The Christian music industry simultaneously produced more "radio-friendly" music, while also creating their own Christian radio stations, retailers, and record labels as outlets for this music. This led to the emergence of dismissive assumptions that Christian musicians are only in the business for money and that Christian music is cheap imitation of secular music, which is more authentic. All of this points to a prevailing stereotype that in Christian rock, sincerity and compositional complexity are sacrificed for the sake of marketability and mass appeal.

This thesis seeks to uncover and analyze Christian rock that has been largely overlooked by those who believe and perpetuate negative stereotypes about the subgenre. A history of Christian rock is presented in a way that existing literature on the subject has yet to accomplish. Chapter 2 includes people and events that challenge prevailing misguided beliefs about the

subgenre. This includes the formation of Tooth & Nail Records and bands signed to the label who produced music that is both compositionally complex and sincere in its expression of Christian faith. The band Emery, whose history and genre classification are explored in Chapter 3, is used as a case study. Chapter 4 is an analysis of the diverse patterns of vocal polyphony in Emery's music. Emery uses two types of this vocal polyphony: alternating and simultaneous. I have identified these same alternating and simultaneous polyphonic vocals in other contemporary rock subgenres such as emo, pop punk, indie rock, and others. This analysis of vocal polyphony in Emery's music uncovers an area of popular music theory that should be explored further in future research.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

To many, the inception of Christian rock threatened the moral and religious stability of the United States due to its ties to rock and roll. Preachers and religious leaders spoke out against this combination of the "music of the devil" and gospel-proclaiming lyrics. Though the subgenre was gradually more accepted over time, Christian musicians faced a new challenge when they realized they had isolated their music from a wider audience by relegating it to the "gospel" and "worship" sections of the record store. The Christian music industry simultaneously produced more "radio-friendly" music, while also creating their own Christian radio stations, retailers, and record labels as outlets for this music. This led to the emergence of dismissive assumptions that Christian musicians are only in the business for money and that Christian music is cheap imitation of secular music, which is more authentic. All of this points to a prevailing stereotype that in Christian rock, sincerity and compositional complexity are sacrificed for the sake of marketability and mass appeal.

Bärbel Harju identifies these assumptions and stereotypes in her essay "Making Christianity Cool: Christian Pop Music's Quest for Popularity." She writes that some of the perceived problems with Christian music include "the alleged poor quality of the music both artistically and production-wise" and "the perceived lack of authenticity due to a disconnect between musical style and lyrical content."[1] Harju continues:

> Christian pop artists did not create new sounds; innovation and creativity were largely surrendered to mainstream artists. Christian singers and bands simply added distinctly Christian lyrics to existing popular musical styles from new wave and metal to punk, rock, and pop. Disregarding its cultural roots and social implications, they considered music a neutral vehicle to convey the evangelistic message. Aside from the obviously derivative nature of the music, the result was often a disconnect between the music and the lyrics. . . . Authenticity, allegedly an important ingredient of art, was glaringly missing from this sanitized version of pop music.[2]

Harju's essay presents a simplistic narrative that Christian musicians are content with creating cliché and unimaginative music so long as it contains a religious message and sells well.

In his research on Brandon Ebel's foundation of Tooth & Nail Records, a label that sought to reconcile Christian and secular music, Christian musician Matthew Carter notes that this movement to create authentic Christian music "was not without its own identity crisis."[3] He observes:

> In the non-Christian or secular music world, bands and artists have always gained credibility by virtue of being not only skilled at their craft, but more so by pushing boundaries and exploring new territory. But in the Christian music world, this was not so much the case. . . . In fact, you might even get shunned for your attempts to break convention, and therein lies the problem.[4]

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[1] Bärbel Harju, "Making Christianity Cool: Christian Pop Music's Quest for Popularity," in *Unpopular Culture*, eds. Martin Lüthe and Sascha Pöhlmann (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 171.
[2] Harju, "Making Christianity Cool," 173.
[3] Matthew Carter, "Labeled: Who Is Brandon Ebel? (Chapter 2)," *Labeled Podcast*, podcast audio, Nov. 30, 2018, https://soundcloud.com/tooth-and-nail-records/labeled-who-is-brandon-ebel.
[4] Carter, "Labeled: The Stigma (Chapter 3)," *Labeled Podcast*, podcast audio, Dec. 13, 2018, https://soundcloud.com/tooth-and-nail-records/labeled-the-stigma.

Carter acknowledges that there was a time when Christian musicians had to meet certain artistic expectations in order to be successful. However, in the early 1990s, Tooth & Nail Records prompted a transition towards more creative freedom in the composition of Christian music. Carter's band Emery is one of many who fought against labels such as "too Christian for the secular world" or "too worldly for the Christian industry."[5] To make a statement that all Christian music is not innovative, complex, creative, sincere, or authentic is to ignore the existence of these musicians who sought to transcend restrictive expectations and stereotypes surrounding the Christian rock subgenre.

This thesis seeks to uncover and analyze Christian rock that has been largely overlooked by those who believe and perpetuate negative stereotypes about the subgenre. In Chapter 2, my narrative of the history of Christian rock is presented in a way that existing literature on the subject has yet to accomplish by including people and events that challenge prevailing misguided beliefs about the subgenre. This includes the formation of Tooth & Nail Records and bands signed to the label who produced music that is both compositionally complex and sincere in its expression of Christian faith. The band Emery, whose history and genre classification are explored in Chapter 3, is used as a case study. Chapter 4 is an analysis of the diverse patterns of vocal polyphony in Emery's music. I have identified and named two types of this vocal polyphony used by Emery, alternating and simultaneous, and the different forms of each type. I have identified these same alternating and simultaneous polyphonic vocals in other contemporary rock subgenres such as emo, pop punk, indie rock, and others. My analysis of vocal polyphony in Emery's music uncovers an area of popular music theory that should be explored further in future research.

[5] Carter, "Labeled: Who Is Brandon Ebel?."

Methodology

Many researchers of popular music have previously discussed the issue of authenticity in rock music. I believe that Christian rock has its own place in this wider discussion. However, my use of the term "authenticity" in regard to this thesis refers to the idea that authentic Christian rock achieves two goals: Firstly, the music is compositionally complex; secondly, the songwriter displays a sincerity in their lyrics that reflects a genuine belief in the Christian faith and is not motivated primarily by monetary gain as a result of selling their music. Evidently, a method of measuring this type of authenticity is just as elusive as a method of measuring authenticity in all rock music. Nevertheless, discussions of Christian rock's authenticity pervade perceptions and stereotypes about the subgenre. This concept of authenticity in Christian rock is what my use of the term "authenticity" refers to.

In my analysis of Emery's music in Chapter 4, and further discussion of this analysis applied to contemporary rock music in Chapter 5, certain terms that I adopt for my analysis are not necessarily used according to their traditional definitions. This includes most significantly my use of the term "polyphony." My use of the term refers to two or more voices (recorded or performed by one or more vocalists) creating either alternating vocal effects or simultaneous vocal lines. One may argue that only the latter is "true" polyphony, since the traditional use of the term polyphony refers to two or more voices singing independent, simultaneous lines. However, I believe that the analysis of alternating vocal effects in Emery's music and other contemporary rock music is just as significant as the analysis of simultaneous vocal lines. The term polyphony etymologically means "many voices" and does not imply simultaneity. Therefore, my use of the term polyphony that relies upon this etymological derivation also does not imply simultaneity, unless in reference to simultaneous vocal polyphony. My adoption of the

term "hocket" from studies in Medieval polyphony is also modified from its traditional definition, which is explained within the context of analysis in Chapter 4.

My citation of tracks transcribed in the figures that appear in Chapters 4 and 5 was recommended by Brad Osborn and appears in the following format:

"Song Title" (Year of Album Release-Track Number, Time Stamp)

This simplified format prevents the unnecessary repetition of sometimes lengthy album titles. This format also makes the referenced track and section of the track easily accessible on any listening platform. In each transcription, only the main vocal lines are transcribed, not accompanying background harmonies or doubled octaves.

Review of Literature

Pop/Rock Theory

There are numerous sources on studies in pop/rock theory. A few are restricted to rock of past decades, such as Trevor de Clercq and David Temperley's "A Corpus Analysis of Rock Harmony" which focuses on the 1950s through 1990s, and Richard Bobbitt's *Harmonic Technique in the Rock Idiom: The Theory and Practice of Rock Harmony*, which examines rock in the context of the 1970s.[6] John Covach answers the question of why and how rock music should be analyzed in his essay "We Won't Get Fooled Again: Rock Music and Musical Analysis."[7] Dai Griffiths' "The High Analysis of Low Music" seeks to answer the question of why it is necessary to analyze popular music, while Ken Stephenson's *What to Listen for in*

[6] Trevor de Clercq and David Temperley, "A Corpus Analysis of Rock Harmony," *Popular Music* 30, no. 1 (2011): 47–70.; Richard Bobbitt, *Harmonic Technique in the Rock Idiom: The Theory and Practice of Rock Harmony* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1976).
[7] John Covach, "We Won't Get Fooled Again: Rock Music and Musical Analysis," in *Keeping Score: Music, Disciplinarity, Culture*, ed. David Schwarz, Anahid Kassabian, and Lawrence Siegel, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 75–89.

Rock: A Stylistic Analysis seeks to set parameters for qualifying characteristics of rock of all kinds.[8] Franco Fabbri also explores qualifications of genre in "What Kind of Music?."[9] Chapter 4 of Jason Toynbee's *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity, and Institutions* examines genre as well.[10] Richard Middleton seeks to understand where popular music should be located within music history in "Articulating Musical Meaning/Re-Constructing Musical History/Locating the Popular."[11]

Recent dissertations on pop/rock theory include de Clercq's "Sections and Successions in Successful Songs: A Prototype Approach to Form in Rock Music" and Drew Nobile's "A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Rock Music."[12] Recent studies I found particularly relevant to analyzing Emery's music are Mark Spicer's "(Ac)cumulative Form in Pop-Rock Music" and Temperley's "The Melodic-Harmonic 'Divorce' in Rock."[13]

Pop/Rock Musicology

Jeffrey N. Gatten's *Rock Music Scholarship: An Interdisciplinary Bibliography* contains sources on interactions between rock music and Christianity, as well as Christian rock.[14] Antoine Hennion's "The Production of Success: An Anti-Musicology of the Pop Song" examines French pop music and points out that musicological research of pop music may require examination

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[8] Dai Griffiths, "The High Analysis of Low Music," *Music Analysis* 18, no. 3 (1999): 389–35.; Ken Stephenson, *What to Listen for in Rock: A Stylistic Analysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).
[9] Franco Fabbri, "What Kind of Music?," *Popular Music* 2, (1982): 131–143.
[10] Jason Toynbee, *Making Popular Music: Musicians, Creativity, and Institutions* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
[11] Richard Middleton, "Articulating Musical Meaning/Re-Constructing Musical History/Locating the Popular," *Popular Music* 5, (1985): 5–43.
[12] de Clercq, "Sections and Successions in Successful Songs: A Prototype Approach to Form in Rock Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Rochester, 2012).; Drew Nobile, "A Structural Approach to the Analysis of Rock Music" (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 2014).
[13] Mark Spicer, "(Ac)cumulative Form in Pop-Rock Music," *Twentieth-Century Music* 1, no. 1 (2004): 29–64.; Temperley, "The Melodic-Harmonic 'Divorce' in Rock." *Popular Music* 26, no. 2 (2007): 323–342.
[14] Jeffrey N. Gatten, *Rock Music Scholarship: An Interdisciplinary Bibliography* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1995).

from different perspectives than those traditionally taken.[15] Middleton's "Popular Music Analysis and Musicology: Bridging the Gap" and John Shepherd's "A Theoretical Model for the Sociomusicological Analysis of Popular Musics" call for musicologists and researchers of cultural studies to work together on the research of popular music.[16]

Rock History and Opposition

Many surveys of rock history include commentary on oppositions to the genre of rock, from both Christian and secular perspectives. Sources that address this opposition to rock include Lawrence Grossberg's "Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everyday Life" and Linda Martin and Kerry Seagrave's *Anti-Rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll*.[17] These sources give insight into how rock was originally condemned by Christians, but later embraced for the sake of creating the Christian rock subgenre. Randall J. Stephens' "God Gave Rock and Roll to You" surveys a history of Christian responses to rock and roll.[18]

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[15] Antoine Hennion, "The Production of Success: An Anti-Musicology of the Pop Song," *Popular Music* 3, (1983): 32–40.
[16] Middleton, "Popular Music Analysis and Musicology: Bridging the Gap," *Popular Music* 1993 12, no. 2 (1993): 177–190.; John Shepherd, "A Theoretical Model for the Sociomusicological Analysis of Popular Musics," *Popular Music* 2, (1982): 145–177. See also Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990.); Allan F. Moore, *Rock, The Primary Text: Developing a Musicology of Rock* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001).; Moore, *Song Means: Analysing and Interpreting Recorded Popular Song*, (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2012).
[17] Lawrence Grossberg, "Another Boring Day in Paradise: Rock and Roll and the Empowerment of Everyday Life," *Popular Music* 4, (1985): 225–258.; Linda Martin and Kerry Segrave, *Anti Rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1993). See also James R. McDonald, "Censoring Rock Lyrics: A Historical Analysis of the Debate," *Youth & Society* 19, no. 3 (1988): 294–313.; Joe Stuessy and Scott Lipscomb, *Rock and Roll: Its History and Stylistic Development* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009).; Graham Vulliamy, "A Re-Assessment of the Mass Culture Controversy the Case of Rock Music," *Popular Music and Society* 4, (1975): 130–155.
[18] Randall J. Stephens, "God Gave Rock and Roll to You," *History Today* (May 16, 2018).

Christianity in America

Sources on the influence of American Christianity on popular culture, and vice versa, place Christian rock in the context of both American history and rock history. Colleen McDannell's *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* examines how American Christianity is experienced through material objects and media.[19] Sara Diamond's *Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right* looks into Christian media production, including music studios.[20] Carol Flake's *Redemptorama: Culture, Politics, and the New Evangelicalism* examines the Evangelical movement in America and contains the chapter "Making a Joyful Noise: The New Christian Music."[21] Eileen Luhr's *Witnessing Suburbia: Conservatives and Christian Youth Culture* focuses on the experience of American Christianity from the perspective of young people and contains the chapter "Metal Missionaries to the Nation: Christian Heavy Metal Music, 1984–1994."[22] Andreas Häger's "Christian Rock Concerts as a Meeting between Religion and Popular Culture" takes a sociological approach to a study of Christian rock music and concerts.[23]

Since Christian Rock has its roots in the Jesus People Movement, research on this movement was essential to my work. A bibliography on the Jesus People Movement that pointed me to significant sources is David Di Sabatino's *The Jesus People Movement: An Annotated*

[19] Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995).
[20] Sara Diamond, *Not by Politics Alone: The Enduring Influence of the Christian Right* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998).
[21] Carol Flake, *Redemptorama: Culture, Politics, and the New Evangelicalism* (Garden City, NY: Anchor Press, 1984).
[22] Eileen Luhr, *Witnessing Suburbia: Conservatives and Christian Youth Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009).
[23] Andreas Häger, "Christian Rock Concerts as a Meeting between Religion and Popular Culture," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 18, (2003): 36–55. See also *Religion and Popular Music: Artists, Fans, and Cultures*, ed. Häger (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2018).

Bibliography and General Resource.[24] Larry Eskridge's *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* provides a comprehensive history of the movement.[25]

Christian Rock

Though various sources exist that discuss Christian rock and Contemporary Christian Music (CCM), many contain factual errors and oversights which indicate a laxity in research. These errors will be mentioned as each source is addressed. There are also few sources on Christian rock from musicological or music theoretical perspectives.

Two encyclopedias of CCM have been published, one by Mark Allan Powell in 2002 and another by Don Cusic in 2009.[26] These authors have created standardized definitions and subcategories of CCM as well as a synthesized history. Powell's work compares Christian punk band MxPx to secular punk band Green Day but misspells the guitarist and lead singer of Green Day's name as "Billy Joe Armstrong" rather than "Billie Joe Armstrong." Powell relies heavily on comparisons between Christian rock bands and Green Day, as well as Weezer, presenting a limited scope of the diverse range of styles employed by Christian musicians. These comparisons also reinforce the stereotype that Christian music is derivative of its secular counterparts.

Sources that chronicle the inception, history, and trajectory of Christian rock include Bob Gersztyn's *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music*

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[24] David Di Sabatino, *The Jesus People Movement: An Annotated Bibliography and General Resource* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999). See Kenneth Leech, *Youthquake: The Growth of a Counter-Culture Through Two Decades* (London: Sheldon Press, 1973).; Lowell D. Streiker, *The Jesus Trip: Advent of the Jesus Freaks* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971).

[25] Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[26] Mark Allan Powell, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002).; Don Cusic, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music: Pop, Rock, and Worship* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2009). See also Cusic, *Saved by Song: A History of Gospel and Christian Music* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2012).

Volumes 1 and 2, Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck's *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music*, and John J. Thompson's *Raised by Wolves: The Story of Christian Rock and Roll*.[27] Volume 2 of Gersztyn's work mentions Emery in a list of "many of the top Christian bands" signed by Tooth & Nail Records, but in the same sentence misspells the band name Thousand Foot Krutch as "Thousand Foot Crutch."[28] Howard and Streck provide three categories of CCM, which I use in my discussion of Emery's music.[29] Thompson's *Raised by Wolves* is the only source of these that includes a discussion of Tooth & Nail Records' place within Christian rock history. Shawn David Young's *Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock* explores Jesus People USA's (JPUSA) influence on early Christian rock.[30] Works by Henna Jousmaki specifically examine Christian metal.[31]

Interactions between secular rock and Christianity have been chronicled and analyzed in sources such as Mark Joseph's *The Rock & Roll Rebellion: Why People of Faith Abandoned Rock Music and Why They're Coming Back* and Stephens' *The Devil's Music: How Christians*

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[27] Bob Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World: The Definitive History of Contemporary Christian Music Volumes 1 and 2* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2012).; Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck, *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999).; John J. Thompson, *Raised by Wolves: The Story of Christian Rock and Roll* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2000). See also Barry Alfonso, *The Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music*. New York: Billboard Books, 2002.; Lorraine Ali, "The Glorious Rise of Christian Pop," *Newsweek* 138, no. 3 (July 16, 2001): 38–44.; Paul Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music: Where it Came From, What it Is, Where it's Going* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985).; Howard, "Contemporary Christian Music: Where Rock Meets Religion," *Journal of Popular Culture* 26, no. 1 (1992): 123–130.; Daniel Radosh, *Rapture Ready! Adventures in the Parallel Universe of Christian Pop Culture* (New York: Scribner, 2008).; Bill Young, "Contemporary Christian Music: Rock the Flock," in *The God Pumpers: Religion in the Electronic Age*, ed. Marshall Fishwick and Ray B. Browne (Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1987), 141–158.

[28] Gersztyn, *Jesus Rocks the World Volume 2*, 143.

[29] Howard and Streck, *Apostles of Rock*, 16-17.

[30] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2015).

[31] Henna Jousmaki, "Studying Religious Music at the Grassroots Level: A Look into the Discourse Practices of Christian Metal Bands Online," *Scripta Instituti Donneriani Aboensis* 25, (2013): 110–122.; Jousmaki, "Dialogicality and Spiritual Quest in Christian Metal Lyrics," *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 25, no. 2 (Summer 2013): 273–286.

Inspired, Condemned, and Embraced Rock 'n' Roll.[32] Though Stephens' work was published around two decades after Tooth & Nail Records was founded, he only mentions the record label very briefly in the epilogue.[33] This record label, as I discuss in my thesis, was very important for the development of Christian rock in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Of sources on the Christian rock music industry, only two discuss Tooth & Nail Records: Jonathan Dueck's "Crossing the Street: Velour 100 and Christian Rock," Andrew Theodore Mall's "'The Stars are Underground': Undergrounds, Mainstreams, and Christian Popular Music,"[34] Both sources explore Christian rock's apparent conflict with secular or mainstream rock.

Bärbel Harju's "Making Christianity Cool: Christian Pop Music's Quest for Popularity" creates a simplistic narrative that all Christian rock music is uncreative and unimaginative, which ignores bands such as Emery and others on Tooth & Nail Records that challenge this assumption.[35] Frank Burch Brown's "Christian Music: More than Just the Words" and Megan

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[32] Mark Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion: Why People of Faith Abandoned Rock Music and Why They're Coming Back* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999).; Stephens, *The Devil's Music: How Christians Inspired, Condemned, and Embraced Rock 'n' Roll* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018). See also Joseph, *Faith, God, and Rock & Roll: How People of Faith are Transforming American Popular Music* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2004).; Gary Krug, *Rock—The Beat Goes On: A Christian Perspective on Trends in Rock Music* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1987).; David W. Stowe, *No Sympathy for the Devil: Christian Pop Music and the Transformation of American Evangelicalism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Robin Sylvan, *Traces of the Spirit: The Religious Dimensions of Popular Music* (New York: New York University Press, 2002).

[33] Stephens, *The Devil's Music*, 240.

[34] Jonathan Dueck, "Crossing the Street: Velour 100 and Christian Rock," *Popular Music and Society* 24, no. 2 (Summer 2000): 127-148.; Andrew Theodore Mall, "'The Stars are Underground': Undergrounds, Mainstreams, and Christian Popular Music," (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2012). See also Heather Hendershot, *Shaking the World for Jesus: Media and Conservative Evangelical Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004).; Powell, "Jesus Climbs the Charts: The Business of Contemporary Christian Music," *Christian Century* 119, no. 26 (2002): 20–26.; William D. Romanowski, "Evangelicals and Popular Music: The Contemporary Christian Music Industry," in *Religion and Popular Culture in America*, ed. Bruce David Forbes and Jeffrey H. Mahan, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 99–122.; Romanowski, "Roll Over Beethoven, Tell Martin Luther the News: American Evangelicals and Rock Music," *Journal of American Culture* 15, no. 3 (1992): 79–88.

[35] Bärbel Harju, "Making Christianity Cool: Christian Pop Music's Quest for Popularity," in *Unpopular Culture*, eds. Martin Lüthe and Sascha Pöhlmann (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 169–186. See also Frank Schaeffer, *Addicted to Mediocrity: Twentieth-Century Christians and the Arts* (Westchester, IL: Cornerstone Books, 1981).

Livengood's "Watering Down Christianity? An Examination of the Use of Theological Words in Christian Music" both specifically look at the lyrics of Christian rock music.[36] All of these sources examine stereotypes and perceptions about the Christian rock subgenre.

Many preachers and evangelical leaders criticized rock and roll and Christian rock for various reasons. These critiques are presented in literature such as Bob Larson's *Rock & Roll: The Devil's Diversion*, Richard H. Niebuhr's *Christ and Culture*, Jimmy Swaggart's *Religious Rock 'n' Roll: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing*, David Wilkerson's *Confessions of a Rock n Roll Hater!*, and Wilkerson's *Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth*.[37]

Some sources that provide a prescriptive approach to writing and listening to Christian rock include Glenn Kaiser's *The Responsibility of the Christian Musician* and Dan Peters, Steve Peters, and Cher Merrill's *What About Christian Rock?*.[38]

Two unique sources on subgenres of rock include Andy Greenwald's *Nothing Feels Good: Punk Rock, Teenagers, and Emo* and Andrew Beaujon's *Body Piercing Saved My Life: Inside the Phenomenon of Christian Rock*.[39] Both Greenwald and Beaujon, writers for *SPIN Magazine*, traveled across the country to speak with influential figures in each respective subgenre of music. Both books are written in a similar style: as a story of the development of

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[36] Frank Burch Brown, "Christian Music: More than Just the Words," *Theology Today* 62, no. 2 (July 2005): 223–229.; Megan Livengood, "Watering Down Christianity? An Examination of the Use of Theological Words in Christian Music," *Journal of Media and Religion* 3, no. 2 (2004): 119–129.

[37] Bob Larson, *Rock & Roll: The Devil's Diversion* (McCook, NE: Bob Larson, 1970).; Richard H. Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1951).; Jimmy Swaggart, *Religious Rock 'n' Roll: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* (Baton Rouge: Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, 1987).; David Wilkerson, *Confessions of a Rock n Roll Hater!* (Lindale, TX: Last Days Ministries, 1983).; David Wilkerson, *Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth* (Lindale, TX: World Challenge, 1985).

[38] Glenn Kaiser, *The Responsibility of the Christian Musician* (Chicago: Cornerstone Press, 1994).; Dan Peters, Steve Peters, and Cher Merrill, *What About Christian Rock?* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1986). See also Charlie Peacock, *At the Crossroads: An Insider's Look at the Past, Present, and Future of Contemporary Christian Music* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999).; H. T. Spence, *Confronting Contemporary Christian Music: A Plain Account of its History, Philosophy, and Future* (Dunn, NC: Companion Press, 1997).

[39] Andy Greenwald, *Nothing Feels Good: Punk Rock, Teenagers, and Emo* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2003).; Andrew Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life: Inside the Phenomenon of Christian Rock* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2006).

each subgenre with many interviews throughout. Beaujon's chapter "More Than Just A Song" presents a detailed account of Ebel and Tooth & Nail Records.[40] Beaujon also elaborates on Howard and Streck's three categories of CCM.[41] Though Greenwald's book is primarily about punk rock and emo, connections between those subgenres and Christian rock come up often.

Emery

One secondary source specifically on the band Emery is Aaron Lunsford's *Emery: The Unlikely Masters of Rock*, described as "an insider's account of the band you know as Emery."[42] Brad Osborn interviewed Emery's guitarist Matthew Carter and analyzed the form of some of Emery's music, in his dissertation "Beyond Verse and Chorus: Experimental Formal Structures in Post-Millennial Rock Music."[43] This research also appears in Osborn's articles "Subverting the Verse-Chorus Paradigm: Terminally Climactic Forms in Recent Rock Music" and "Understanding Through-Composition in Post-Rock, Math-Metal, and other Post-Millennial Rock Genres."[44] Carter hosts his own *Break It Down Podcast*, many episodes of which detail Emery's music.[45] Carter also hosts Tooth & Nail Records' *Labeled Podcast*, which details the history of Christian rock.[46] Some episodes of the now discontinued *Tooth & Nail Podcast* hosted by Emery vocalist Toby Morrell detail more information about Emery's music. Though Tooth & Nail Records had

[40] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 55–73.
[41] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 62-63.
[42] Aaron Lunsford, *Emery: The Unlikely Masters of Rock* (Seattle: Bad Christian Media, 2017).
[43] Brad Osborn, "Beyond Verse and Chorus: Experimental Formal Structures in Post-Millennial Rock Music," (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 2010).
[44] Osborn, "Subverting the Verse-Chorus Paradigm: Terminally Climactic Forms in Recent Rock Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 23–47.; Osborn, "Understanding Through-Composition in Post-Rock, Math-Metal, and other Post-Millennial Rock Genres," *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (October 2011), n.p.
[45] Matthew Carter, *Break It Down Podcast*, podcast audio, http://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast.
[46] Carter, *Labeled Podcast*, podcast audio, https://labeledpodcast.com/.

removed this podcast from podcast streaming services, a fan has archived each episode online.[47] Other insightful sources on the band and their music include interviews, liner notes of their albums, and DVDs on the special editions of certain albums.

[47] Toby Morrell, *Tooth & Nail Podcast*, podcast audio, http://kamikazeproductions.net/tooth/casts.html?fbclid=IwAR3m_EUEd5VLB7e66U1CxG3i0t-Bm_M_DvsuRn6D6pcRmSj5X7ZP2Lqp4po.

Chapter 2

A History of Christian Rock

The Jesus People Movement and Jesus Music

The Jesus People Movement of the 1960s and early '70s was a sociocultural movement in the United States that was opposed to yet inspired by both traditional religious structures and the countercultural hippie movement. Described as "a counterculture within a counterculture," Jesus People "opposed not only the hedonistic culture of their day but also rejected established churches."[1] This movement

> was a synthesis of opposing cultural forces at work in the late Sixties – a mixture of the liberal social and political ideas of the countercultural rebellion with a conservative evangelical revival in the church. Members were at once alienated by the mainline church tradition and disillusioned with the countercultural alternatives. . . . Many of the converts traded drugs for the Jesus scene, social revolution for personal redemption.[2]

[1] William David Romanowski, "Rock 'n' Religion: A Sociocultural Analysis of the Contemporary Christian Music Industry" (Ph.D. diss., Bowling Green State University, 1990), 61.; Bärbel Harju, "Making Christianity Cool: Christian Pop Music's Quest for Popularity," in *Unpopular Culture*, ed. Martin Lüthe and Sascha Pöhlmann, 169–186 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2016), 172.
[2] Romanowski, "Rock 'n' Religion," 61–62.

Despite the numerous regional subgroups of this phenomenon, the Jesus People Movement as a whole was unified by common characteristics. These were observed in 1971 by travelling preacher Arthur Blessitt, who named "five marks of the Jesus Revolution."[3] The first was "joy and happiness in worship." Jesus People arranged worship services and events that did not dwell on sin or an ascetic attitude, but rather promoted enjoyment of a Christian life. The second mark was "a real commitment to Jesus Christ, to the historic and living Christ, and to the Word of God." Jesus People encouraged followers to know Jesus as a person and to read the Bible often. The third mark, "a tremendous compassionate and humanitarian attitude towards our fellow men," reflects the emergence of numerous Christian communes and organizations that formed in response to the movement. The Jesus People's eagerness to inform potential converts about the "good news of the gospel" is the fourth mark, "a great zeal in telling others about Jesus Christ." The fifth mark, "a spirit of victory," refers to defeating the devil and Hell through each converted soul.

Jesus People used music as a primary tool to spread their message and convert others. This music combined the religious lyrical themes of hymns and gospel music with the styles, forms, and instrumentation of rock and folk genres, as well as the free hippie lifestyle.[4] From this environment emerged the earliest examples of Christian rock, a subgenre which combined the most popular styles of rock music with a message commonly conveyed by the Jesus People Movement, emphasizing a love for Jesus Christ and the importance of saving one's soul before the second coming of Christ. This subgenre was first known as "Jesus music" or "Jesus rock."[5]

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[3] Kenneth Leech, *Youthquake: The Growth of a Counter-Culture Through Two Decades* (London: Sheldon Press, 1973), 157.
[4] Harju, "Making Christianity Cool," 172.
[5] Larry Eskridge, *God's Forever Family: The Jesus People Movement in America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 215.

No singular location marks the beginning of Jesus music; likewise, no single band or artist is responsible for its origin.[6] However, regional founders of the emerging subgenre, such as Chicago-based Resurrection Band, and southern California's Agape, served as models for future Christian musicians.[7] The first ever Christian rock band was most likely The Crusaders from Los Angeles with the release of their earliest album *Make a Joyful Noise with Drums and Guitars* in 1966.[8]

Jesus music performers around the country blatantly expressed a Christian message in their music. As Chuck Girard of the southern California band Love Song stated in 1971, "When you ask somebody what our songs are about there's no ambiguity. It's right there in plain simple language with no deep intellectual vibes. What we're saying is Jesus, one way. If you want the answer follow it."[9] This expression of the Christian faith through music, though honest and transparent in early Christian rock, gradually became less so through recent decades, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

This new subgenre of music was immediately met with opposition from influential church leaders across the United States. One of the most outspoken leaders was Pentecostal evangelist preacher Jimmy Swaggart, known for his loud and furious sermons against rock and roll, which he believed to be "the music of the devil."[10] Swaggart published his book *Religious Rock 'n' Roll: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* in 1987, which denounced the subgenre of Christian rock.[11] Pastor Bob Larson, another outspoken opponent to rock and roll, published his book *Rock*

[6] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 215.
[7] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 215.
[8] Randall J. Stephens, *The Devil's Music: How Christians Inspired, Condemned, and Embraced Rock 'n' Roll* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2018), 172.
[9] Patrick Corman, "Freaking Out on Jesus." *Rolling Stone*, no. 85 (24 June 1971): 25.
[10] Stephens, "God Gave Rock and Roll to You," *History Today*, May 16, 2018, n.p.
[11] Jimmy Swaggart, *Religious Rock 'n' Roll: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing* (Baton Rouge: Jimmy Swaggart Ministries, 1987), vi.

& Roll: The Devil's Diversion in 1967. In it, he lists psychological, physiological, and sociological effects of listening to the music, as well as consequences of dancing to or performing rock music. Larson also denounced the subgenre of Christian rock:

> Why adopt the sexually exhilarative rhythms of rock music to communicate Christ? I have heard some of these attempts to wed Christ with rock and because of the blare of the music the message was at best vaguely conveyed. The Biblical command is to be separate from the world. . . . Communicating with rock and roll implies complete approval of this music. It means that Christians identify with the negative frustrations and philosophies of rock music rather than offering the positive assurance of hope in Christ. . . . Using rock and roll to present Christ leaves the converted person still prey to the un-Christian message of commercial rock.[12]

Christian author David Noebel echoed these sentiments a decade later:

> I'm not against contemporary Christian music. I'm against Christian rock. Good Christian music is good for the body, soul, spirit, and mind, and it has good melody, harmony, and rhythm. I think those seven parameters set out the difference. . . . Christian rock breaks down the barrier that should be raised in the church against the rock and roll subculture. It reinforces secular rock. The church should be the salt of the earth. We should have a new song and new music. Why would we want to baptize a form of music that is born, bred, and raised in sin?[13]

Evangelist David Wilkerson agreed with these leaders as well. His 1959 article in *Pentecostal Evangel Magazine*, "Rock and Roll – The Devil's Heartbeat" gave "four warnings" against rock and roll, emphasizing its ties to "Devilish manifestations."[14] However, in his 1983 booklet *Confessions of a Rock n Roll Hater!*, he reversed his stance:

> I accused converted rock and rollers of living a double-standard. As I saw it, they should have forsaken everything from their past – rock music included. But I could not deny that most of them were sincere, deeply in love with Jesus, and God was blessing their efforts. . . . In all sincerity, I preached against what I thought was compromise. I condemned a music-style that was born in rebellion and idolatry. Looking back, I wonder how many innocent young converts I hurt – those who were giving to Christ the only talent they had. They knew nothing else,

[12] Bob Larson, *Rock & Roll: The Devil's Diversion* (McCook, NE: Bob Larson, 1970), 91–92.
[13] Steve Rabey, "A Noebel Cause: The Constant Crusader Shares His Rhetoric on Rock," *CCM Magazine* (May 1986): 25.
[14] David Wilkerson, "Rock and Roll – The Devil's Heartbeat," *Pentecostal Evangel*, (July 12, 1959): 4–5.

> and to them rock was no longer an offering to Satan. Their idols had been crucified.[15]

In this publication, Wilkerson offers "Seven Steps Toward Balance In Music," with each step supported by Bible verses. However, Wilkerson again changed his opinion in "The Music of Devils in God's House," a chapter from his 1985 book *Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth*, calling Christian rockers "desecraters of God's holy altar!"[16] Each of these religious leaders' stances against Christian rock strongly influenced the opinions and actions of their followers, but did not wipe out Christian rock entirely.

Embracing Jesus Music

Some kept an open mind towards the subgenre of Christian rock, including authors Dan Peters, Steve Peters, and Cher Merrill. Though their "Truth About Rock" seminars in the '80s and book *Why Knock Rock?* published in 1985 "attacked pop music's many immoral lyrics, lifestyles, goals, and graphics," their book *What About Christian Rock?* proved that Christian rock could be a positive influence in evangelical communities.[17] The authors prescribed these parameters (lyrics, lifestyles, goals, and graphics) as a litmus test of the quality of Christian rock for both consumers and performers of the music. Glenn Kaiser drew upon his decades of experience as member of Resurrection Band and leader of Jesus People USA (JPUSA) to form his suggestions to the Christian rock community. Kaiser published his own suggestions on how to be a Christian musician in his 1994 *The Responsibility of the Christian Musician*. This book seeks to ground the musician in a perspective relational to God, family, and church.[18]

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[15] David Wilkerson, *Confessions of a Rock n Roll Hater!* (Lindale, TX: Last Days Ministries, 1983), 2.
[16] David Wilkerson, *Set the Trumpet to Thy Mouth* (Lindale, TX: World Challenge, 1985), 87.
[17] Dan Peters, Steve Peters, and Cher Merrill, *What About Christian Rock?* (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1986), 11.
[18] Glenn Kaiser, *The Responsibility of the Christian Musician* (Chicago: Cornerstone Press, 1994), 1.

Kaiser's group Resurrection Band, formerly known as Charity, was a primary influence on future Jesus music acts. This band was formed by members of JPUSA, a Chicago-based Christian commune founded in 1973 by Jim and Sue Palosaari in Milwaukee, WI. JPUSA members John Herrin Sr., Herrin's daughter Wendi, and Wendi's husband Glenn Kaiser toured the United States with their band Charity. Their musical style was influenced by Glenn Kaiser's background in performing jazz and pop music with his family.[19] Charity's main purpose was evangelization, performing in public spaces such as parks, malls, and community centers. As Charity gained popularity, they changed their name to Resurrection Band and began performing music closer to the style of rock and roll.[20] The musicians set out on an evangelization tour of the United States, but after perceiving a need for evangelization in Chicago, they decided to take root in the city and begin a new branch of JPUSA there. JPUSA stands today as one of the longest-lasting Christian communes in the United States among many religious communes that emerged from the Jesus People Movement in the '70s. The success of Resurrection Band may be one of the main reasons for this longevity.[21] Though the band's main purpose was evangelization through music, income from their concerts, festivals, and other community events also financially supported the JPUSA community.[22]

Resurrection Band's shift from what Herrin describes as "a folk rock kind of sound" to "full-blown rock-and-roll for the Lord" was influenced by secular musicians such as Jimi Hendrix, Cream, and Led Zeppelin.[23] Their music addressed contemporary social issues such as

[19] Don Cusic, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian Music: Pop, Rock, and Worship* (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Press, 2009), 384.
[20] Cusic, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian* Music, 384.
[21] Shawn David Young, "Into the Grey: The Left, Progressivism, and Christian Rock in Uptown Chicago," *Religions* 3, no. 2 (2012): 499.
[22] Cusic, *Encyclopedia of Contemporary Christian* Music, 384.
[23] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath: Jesus People USA, Evangelical Left, and the Evolution of Christian Rock* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2010), 33.

divorce, abortion, and addiction, as well as political issues from poverty and social alienation in urban areas, to South African apartheid, and critiques of American capitalism, materialism, and militarism. Their song "Elevator Muzik" from their 1981 album *Mommy Don't Love Daddy Anymore* critiques the capital motivation behind secular rock music, as well as the overly sentimental messages of most Christian music, proposing instead "music that feeds."[24] The lyrics state:

> Who needs rock and roll?
> Who needs songs about saving your soul?
> Plastic music, plastic food
> Cellophane tunes for that synthetic mood
> You got your inspiration from a vending machine
> It's an audio starvation diet
> Mannequins on a shopping spree
> Who cares if you like it? Buy it
> . . .
> Controlling your wallet, coaxing your soul
> The corporate big brother, it's an overload
> Get off that conveyor, that treadmill of persuasion
> Jesus brings the light into every situation

Resurrection Band combined a religious message with political lyrics that reflected the mission of JPUSA. Part of this mission included founding their own Jesus music festival, Cornerstone.

Communal enjoyment of Jesus music took place at festivals like Cornerstone throughout the United States and internationally. These "Jesus festivals" were modeled after larger festivals such as Woodstock, but featured rock music with Christian themes. The earliest of these was the Faith Festival in Evansville, Indiana that took place in March 1970.[25] In 1972 the Jesus Music Festival of Dallas's Explo '72,[26] or "Godstock," featured emerging Christian rock musicians

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[24] Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck, *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 186.
[25] Paul Baker, *Contemporary Christian Music: Where it Came From, What it Is, Where it's Going* (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1985), 83.
[26] This is not a misspelling of the word "Expo." The name of the festival comes from the idea that it was meant to be "a spiritual explosion." See Edward B. Fiske, "A 'Religious Woodstock' Draws 75,000," *New York Times* (June 16, 1972): 1.

such as Larry Norman and Barry McGuire on the same stage as Johnny Cash and Kris Kristofferson.[27] Cornerstone Festival, founded in 1984, took place every summer in Bushnell, Illinois.[28] This festival provided a platform for newly-emerging Christian music groups until the final festival was held in 2012.[29] Jon Trott, member of JPUSA and editor of *Cornerstone Magazine* from 1977 to 2003, called Cornerstone Festival the "unfestival."[30] As he saw it:

> No Jesus festival existed in the Midwest, and by the early eighties we began to dream about doing one, with a distinct "JPUSA" flavor, ourselves. We knew and respected the promotors of other Jesus festivals, but due to tremendous church resistance to rock music and other cultural forms of expression, the promotors favored "safe," middle-of-the-road CCM performers over the increasing number of innovative Christian rock bands.[31]

Trott and other members of JPUSA sought to provide an honest and authentic Christian rock festival that promoted creative bands with original ideas. Christian rock and Jesus People Movement researcher Shawn David Young observes:

> To the staff of Cornerstone [Festival], their festival was an alternative to other Christian music. . . . [T]he JPUSA community felt the need to offer a venue where Christian musicians felt free to perform music typically *not* accepted by the Christian mainstream (whether due to style or to lyrical content), and where discussions on politics, religion, and art mirrored to some extent what they believed to be both biblical and holistic. While other Christian festivals continue their appeal to fans of mainstream Christian rock (what is considered normative to the parent culture), members of JPUSA argue that Cornerstone [Festival] highlighted a subcultural aesthetic often absent from gatherings sponsored by the gatekeepers of establishment evangelicalism.[32]

Cornerstone Festival set the tone for many future Christian rock festivals throughout the United States and around the world. Christian bands emerged all across the United States in the 1970s

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[27] Barry Alfonso, *The Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music* (New York: Billboard Books, 2002), 22–23.
[28] Shawn David Young, "Into the Grey," 513.
[29] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath*, 184–185.
[30] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath*, 185.
[31] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath*, 185.
[32] Shawn David Young, *Gray Sabbath*, 184–185.

and ’80s that modeled their styles after musicians such as The Beatles, Joni Mitchell, Carole King, Bob Dylan, Led Zeppelin and many others.

One frequent Cornerstone performer that was particularly influential was Larry Norman. Norman released his first solo album *Upon This Rock* in 1969 after leaving the secular psychedelic rock band People!.[33] This album is considered to be “the first full-blown Christian rock album” by Christian rock historian John J. Thompson.[34] He observes that the album “was full of haunting, dark, and nightmarish songs that did little to make the listener feel happy. Norman was far more concerned with being truthful than inspirational.”[35] Lyrics from Norman’s song “Why Should the Devil Have All the Good Music?” from his 1972 album *Only Visiting This Planet* captures the music of the Jesus People Movement well:

> I want the people to know that he saved my soul
> But I still like to listen to the radio
> They say ‘rock ‘n’ roll is wrong, we’ll give you one more chance’
> I say ‘I feel so good I gotta get up and dance
> . . .
> I ain’t knocking the hymns
> Just give me a song that has a beat
> I ain’t knocking the hymns
> Just give me a song that moves my feet
> I don’t like none of those funeral marches
> I ain’t dead yet!

Norman’s influence on the Jesus Music subgenre gained him the title of “the father of Christian Rock.”[36] He is credited with popularizing the “one way” hand gesture, or pointing with the index finger toward heaven, an image commonly associated with the Jesus People Movement.[37]

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[33] Stephens, *The Devil’s Music*, 181.
[34] John J. Thompson, *Raised by Wolves: The Story of Christian Rock and Roll* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2000), 49.
[35] Thompson, *Raised by Wolves*, 49.
[36] Brian Schill, “The Impossibility of Negation: A Theoretical Defense of ‘Cross-Over’ Christian Rock.” *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 16, no. 1 (Summer 2007): n.p.
[37] Alfonso, *Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music*, 19.

Christian rock reached a wider audience through a growth in the number of Christian bookstores. These newly emerging retailers promoted the idea that "Christianity was not merely a belief system but a 'life style'" though a wide range of products including home décor and clothing.[38] The number of independent Christian bookstores in the United States grew from 725 in 1965 to 1850 in 1975.[39] This growth in the number of nationwide Christian retailers contributed to an increase in sales of Christian music, which was rarely found in secular record stores and bookstores.[40] The emergence of Christian radio programs, and later Christian radio stations, in the late 1960s and early '70s further established the subgenre of Christian rock.[41] Overall, this extreme and swift commercialization of the subgenre lead to its new title of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM). In 1983, an expansion of the *Billboard* chart included both Christian and gospel categories, and by the next year CCM sales rose to $75 million, increasing by 15% in 1985.[42] By the 1990s, gospel and CCM sales reached over $550 million; adding concert ticket sales and merchandising, this number reached $900 million.[43] This was more than both classical and jazz sales in the United States, and by 2000 gospel and CCM sales increased to $750 million, more than jazz, classical, and new age combined.[44] Even after an economic crisis and the rise of illegal music downloading, CCM and gospel sales still surpassed $500 million.[45] Larry Eskridge observes:

> Even after the Jesus People faded away, the Christian bookstore industry, fueled by the growing sales of music, greeting cards, videos, toys, witness-wear, and curios, continued its tremendous growth. In recent years, the impact of the

[38] Colleen McDannell, *Material Christianity: Religion and Popular Culture in America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 247.
[39] Eileen Luhr, *Witnessing Suburbia: Conservatives and Christian Youth Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), 71.
[40] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 230.
[41] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 235.
[42] Romanowski, "Rock 'n' Religion," 231.
[43] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 268.
[44] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 268.
[45] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 268.

> Internet and the sale of Christian merchandise in big-box stores like Wal-Mart were a major blow to the industry. But this is the reflection of a changing marketplace, not a sign that the thirst for Christian merchandise has eased.[46]

The Association for Christian Retail reported that the sales of all Christian merchandise were over $4.9 billion as of 2009.[47]

Though some questioned these highly commercialized methods of spreading the gospel message, others believed it was justified in the name of evangelization.[48] Larry Norman opposed this and believed that the extreme commercialization of the subgenre beginning in the late 1970s prioritized money over the message, saying, "We have prostituted ourselves."[49] Regardless of the moral implications, Christian retailers played an important role in providing Christian music to the general public, since they were the only retailers that provided a platform for Christian record labels.

Christian Record Labels and the Recording Industry

Two of the earliest Christian record labels, the Benson Company and Myrrh, grew out of companies that published and sold Christian books and music. The Benson Company, founded in 1902, formed their own record label in the 1970s when John Benson, Jr., began signing contracts with traveling evangelist musicians.[50] A few acts that worked with the Benson Company include DeGarmo & Key and Stryper. A competitor with the Benson Company, Myrrh Records, formed by America's largest seller of religious books and music, Word Incorporated.[51] An executive for

[46] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 272.
[47] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 272.
[48] Romanowski, "Evangelicals and Popular Music: The Contemporary Christian Music Industry," in *Religion and Popular Culture in America*, ed. Bruce David Forbes and Jeffrey H. Mahan, 99–122 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 104.
[49] Steve Rabey, "Of Concerts and Concerns," *Christianity Today*, September 19, 1986: 42.
[50] Mark Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion: Why People of Faith Abandoned Rock Music and Why They're Coming Back* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 11.
[51] Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion*, 12.

Word, Billy Ray Hearn, founded Myrrh Records in 1972. Choosing to name the record label "Myrrh," a word that would be hard to pronounce for anyone unfamiliar with Biblical terminology, was reflective of Hearn's mission to market to only Christians and not to the secular market.[52] Hearn later founded his own label, Sparrow Records. In the 1980s, Hearn's son Bill Hearn acquired Sparrow Records and sold the company to EMI.[53] This move exposed the Christian musicians on Sparrow to a wider consumer audience. Another significant Christian label, Maranatha! Music, grew out of a vision by pastor Chuck Smith and was founded in 1971 by musicians Tom Coomes and Chuck Fromm, members of the Christian rock band Love Song.[54] Larry Norman founded his own record label, Solid Rock Records, in 1975. Resurrection Band, after releasing records on Light Records and Sparrow Records in the 1970s, formed their own label, Grrr Records, in the late '80s.

Billy Ray Hearn, speaking on "crossover" Christian music, or music by Christians on mainstream labels, said, "I wish the industry had not gotten enamored with the secular market. I never wanted to be a part of that world and I got out of it."[55] William David Romanowski observes, however:

> The Christian music industry both influenced and was influenced by trends, practices, and strategies in the mainstream entertainment industry. This does not mean that these evangelical Christians simply "sold out" their evangelical heritage; nor, however, does it mean that the industrialization of contemporary Christian music did not influence evangelicalism. The contemporary Christian music industry evolved with conflicts and contradictions. It can be understood as a process of incorporation: a general process of change that involves not only industrial and business organization, but also communicative and social relations, including the remaking of cultural perceptions. This evangelical venture in popular music making undeniably created discord and confusion both inside and outside the Christian music industry. Arguably, this is because of tensions in their

[52] Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion*, 12.
[53] Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion*, 13.
[54] Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion*, 13.
[55] Devlin Donaldson, "Billy Ray Hearn," *CCM Magazine* (June 1988): 27.

> common assumptions about the Christian life and cultural activity, which in turn, ironically, limited the possibilities of success for contemporary Christian music.[56]

Despite this mutual influence, many musicians, labels, and executives separated themselves from their mainstream counterparts. With this separation came the formation of stereotypes about Christian rock and CCM. One of these is the idea of "Jesuses-per-minute," or that musicians had to say Jesus' name a certain number of times in a song in order to make it "Christian enough." However, Bill Hearn believes that this is a myth:

> Our A&R people are challenged to help our artists to craft and make the best music possible. Yes, there have been times when we've said, "Are we trying to get Christian radio? Is this an important part of marketing this record? If it is, we need to give Christian radio something they want. Something they'll play." That doesn't necessarily mean Jesuses-per-minute. It may be musical. It may be melody. It may be production. It may be the mix. But we don't have conversations like, "There's just not enough content," because, first of all, I'm hoping we're not gonna sign an artist that doesn't have some meat in their lyrics. I don't care how many *Jesuses* there are as long as it's poetic and it's creative. Now, I'm not saying that an A&R guy's never gone in and said, "Hey, if we said this instead of that, radio might play it." I will tell you it's not a strategy of ours, and it's certainly not a mandate that our A&R guys have. I just wouldn't do that. If it's a bad song, make it better, but you're certainly not gonna make a bad song better if you throw a couple of *Jesuses* in the chorus.[57]

Myth or not, musicians faced further challenges that limited their artistic expression in the name of Jesus. Though Christian labels believed they were producing quality music, many musicians observed that their separation from the mainstream closed them off from a large portion of the sales market. This realization led to musicians remaining silent or ambiguous about both their faith and their identification with the Christian rock subgenre.

One of the earliest examples of this was Amy Grant, who began her career as a Christian artist, but broke into the mainstream when her 1982 album *Age to Age* reached gold and then

[56] Romanowski, "Evangelicals and Popular Music," 104.
[57] Andrew Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life: Inside the Phenomenon of Christian Rock* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2006), 185.

platinum album status.[58] With a plan to ride this wave of popularity, her next album, *Unguarded*, was released in 1985 with the intention of being her gateway into the mainstream. This album reached #4 on the *Billboard* chart, and her single "Find a Way" reached the Top 40.[59] Fans of CCM criticized this move, as well as Grant's appearance and choice of clothing, which many believed to be too sensual for a Christian artist. Grant's move into the mainstream may have "opened a Pandora's Box" in the CCM industry, as other musicians followed suit later on.[60]

The band Sixpence None the Richer experienced similar criticism with their 1999 single "Kiss Me." Though the single was released on a Christian label, the song became immensely popular and reached #1 in ten different countries.[61] However, the band was not nominated for any categories at the Dove Awards, a Christian alternative to the Grammy Awards. The Gospel Music Association (GMA) and many fans of CCM believed that the lyrics of "Kiss Me" were too sensual to be acknowledged as good Christian music. In response to the song's popularity, the GMA edited their definition of the term "Christian music." According to the association's edits, a "Christian recording" constitutes:

> music in any style whose lyric is substantially based upon historically orthodox Christian truth contained in or derived from the Holy Bible; and/or an expression of worship of God or praise for his works; and/or testimony of relationship with God through Christ; and/or obviously prompted and informed by a Christian worldview.[62]

A later edit of the definition read: "For purposes of GMA Music Award eligibility, the lyrics of all entries in the Album and Song categories will be: based upon the historically orthodox Christian faith contained in or derived from the Holy Bible; or apparently prompted and

[58] Eskridge, *God's Forever Family*, 267.
[59] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 34.
[60] Alfonso, *Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music*, 29.
[61] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 176.
[62] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 177.

informed by a Christian worldview."[63] Despite widespread popularity of the song, Sixpence None the Richer was essentially banned from receiving Christian awards. President of the GMA Frank Breeden commented that the definition change was an "eligibility criterion for an awards show, not an end-all statement about Christian music."[64] Regardless of this intention, the controversy caused Christian musicians and labels to be more aware of their lyrical content so as not to exclude themselves from future award shows.

When musicians like Amy Grant and Sixpence None the Richer experienced crossover success and consequential backlash, Christian musicians began to strategize how their faith was reflected in their music. They carefully chose the labels and subgenres with which they identified. Bands that emerged in the 1990s and early 2000s, like Switchfoot, Creed, Lifehouse, and others, refused to make clear statements on their faith, or whether they identified with the Christian rock subgenre. As Tim Foreman of Switchfoot declared, "we're Christian by faith, not by genre."[65] Jason Wade of Lifehouse has stated, "My music is spiritually based, but we don't want to be labeled as a 'Christian band,' because all of a sudden people's walls come up and they won't listen to your music and what you have to say."[66] Christian rock had come a long way from the early Jesus Music of the 1970s, which, as Chuck Girard stated, had "no ambiguity." These new bands of the 1990s and 2000s were intentionally ambiguous in their message, but as Lorraine Ali observes, "To young Christians, these rock artists are Gospel-spreading heroes. Like the kids, they exist between dueling cultures, forming an unlikely bridge from explosive

[63] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 177.
[64] Alfonso, *Billboard Guide to Contemporary Christian Music*, 31.
[65] Kirk Miller, "Switchfoot," *Rolling Stone* 933 (October 16, 2003): 36.
[66] David Wild, "The Rock & Roll Gospel According to Lifehouse," *Rolling Stone* 870, (7 June 2001): 45.

teenage rebellion to steady, unwavering faith."[67] Ambiguity was used as a tool for evangelization, to draw more people into hearing a faith-filled message.

A few record labels emerged that were equally ambiguous about their religious affiliation. One of these labels was Tooth & Nail Records, founded by Brandon Ebel in 1993. While working at Frontline Records, a Christian label based in California that signed bands such as Poor Old Lu, Altar Boys, and Daniel Amos, Ebel met many bands who considered themselves Christians, but did not necessarily create Christian music. [68] These bands nevertheless had trouble getting signed to either type of label, whether Christian or non-Christian. Ebel founded Tooth & Nail Records to sign bands regardless of their religious affiliation, nor whether they considered their music to be Christian. In an interview with Matt Carter of Emery on Tooth & Nail Records' *Labeled Podcast*, Ebel stated, "When I started it my vision was. . . I don't wanna sign only Christian bands, but I wanna sign bands with a positive message. I'm a Christian myself so if I can find an artist that's Christian and has some kind of a Christian backdrop or worldview that would be cool to support them."[69] With this creative freedom, Ebel believes that he has "given some Christians the opportunity to create their art the way they wanted to."[70] Ebel has even said that "there's no such thing as Christian music," experiencing firsthand a certain level of fluidity between the west coast punk scene and Christian punk, rock, and alternative.[71] One example is MxPx, who released their album *Pokinatcha* on Tooth & Nail Records in 1994. MxPx stood out as "a rock band full of Christians rather than a Christian rock band."[72] Other early bands that signed to the label include Wish for Eden, Starflyer 59, and Plankeye. At the

[67] Lorraine Ali, "The Glorious rise of Christian Pop." *Newsweek* 138, no. 3 (July 16, 2001): 41.
[68] Matthew Carter, "Labeled: Who Is Brandon Ebel? (Chapter 2)," *Labeled Podcast*, Podcast audio, Nov. 30, 2018, https://soundcloud.com/tooth-and-nail-records/labeled-who-is-brandon-ebel.
[69] Carter, "Labeled: Who Is Brandon Ebel?."
[70] "Highest Uncommon Denomination," *Alternative Press* 107 (June 1997): 21.
[71] "Highest Uncommon Denomination," 24.
[72] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 62.

1994 Cornerstone Festival, Tooth & Nail Records set up their own merchandise booth and a tent for each of these bands to play under. They sold all of their merchandise and helped push Tooth & Nail Records to the forefront as a promising new member of the Christian rock scene.[73]

Within just a few years, Tooth & Nail Records had created a branch of the Christian music industry that was separate from more mainstream CCM artists. Operating out of California and later Seattle, Washington, in the wake of the grunge rock movement, Tooth & Nail Records separated themselves geographically from other popular Christian labels, most of which were centrally located in Nashville, Tennessee. These Christian musicians of the Pacific Northwest had strong ties to the straight edge hardcore punk movement and other regionally-based subgenres. For example, Tooth & Nail Records bands Unashamed, Focused, Strongarm, and Zao were pioneers of the spirit-filled hardcore subgenre.[74]

Any Christian musicians who separated themselves from the secular music scene would not have found success in this environment where Christians and non-Christians performed at the same venues. Chris Foley from the Tooth & Nail Records band Luxury recalls struggling with a "false dichotomy" between Christian music and secular music.[75] In the band's experience, the concept of a Christian music scene that ran parallel to a secular music scene "just seemed so strange to us."[76] Foley believes this mindset limited Luxury's creativity "because most of the music we were listening to was from [the secular music] world, and we found a lot of beautiful and wonderful music there" that influenced the band's style.[77]

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[73] Jesse Bryan and Jordan Butcher, *No New Kinda Story: The Real Story of Tooth & Nail Records*, YouTube Movies, directed by Jesse Bryan, Seattle: Tooth & Nail Records, 2014.
[74] Bryan Patton, "Jeff Jacquay of Unashamed," *As The Story Grows Podcast*, podcast audio, Feb. 13, 2019, http://www.asthestorygrows.com/e35ff438.
[75] Carter, "Labeled: The Stigma."
[76] Carter, "Labeled: The Stigma."
[77] Carter, "Labeled: The Stigma."

Tooth & Nail Records forged a path towards more creative freedom for Christian musicians. Ebel believes that his label and the musicians he worked with have transcended the negative stigma attached to Christian rock. In Foley's experience, Tooth & Nail Records' Christian rock exists separately from the mainstream CCM industry and rejects a divide between Christian and secular music. This separation allows artists to create music that is both sincere in its expression of Christian faith and compositionally complex. Emery is one Tooth & Nail Records band whose expression of Christian faith in music has transformed over time but has remained sincere. One enduring compositional element in their music is their use of vocal polyphony. Forms of vocal polyphony found in Emery's music can be heard in pop punk, emo, indie rock, and alternative rock subgenres as well. Emery's unique employment of this vocal polyphony challenges the stereotype that Christian rock is not compositionally complex.

Chapter 3

Emery

History of Emery

Toby Morrell, Joey Svendsen, Devin Shelton, and Matt Carter formed Emery in 2001. They grew up in the small towns of Greer and Blue Ridge, South Carolina. In high school, Shelton and Carter played in a band called Simply Waynes, later changing their name to Satchel. Morrell and Svendsen, after meeting in college, formed the band Joe 747. Each founding member earned degrees in music from Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC, except for Morrell, who changed his major from music to education.

On an episode of Tooth & Nail Records' *Labeled Podcast*, Morrell recalls having a very narrow view of the world of popular music while in the small town of Greer.[1] He thought that few bands existed besides the ones he heard on the radio. In college, Svendsen introduced Morrell to emo, indie, and alternative music that he had never heard before. Morrell believes the

[1] Carter, "Emery: A Southern Story of Unlikely Success [Labeled: S1 Ep7]," *Labeled Podcast*, Podcast audio, Dec. 18, 2017, https://youtu.be/0ASAb_tKSQc.

majority of this music was Christian rock, and most of that was early Tooth & Nail Records bands such as Poor Old Lou, Plankeye, Aaron Sprinkle, and Pedro the Lion. Morrell was never exposed to music with screaming vocals until hearing Svendsen's music collection. Morrell always assumed one had to "sing in a proper style and show people how to sing well, in a way that resembles choral music."[2] However, Svendsen's music, specifically Pedro the Lion's *Whole* EP and Aaron Sprinkle's band Rose Blossom Punch, introduced Morrell to a new level of creativity in song writing and vocal style. Morrell recalls, "That's when I realized, 'Wait a minute. You can do anything with music.'"[3] These emo, indie, and alternative subgenres have had immense influence on Emery's music.

Morell and Svendsen's band Joe 747 was not well-received in a community unfamiliar with their style. Svendsen recalls:

> When Toby and I were doing Joe 747, that was the sound we were shooting for (90's emo). While Matt and Devin were playing the Helmet, Silverchair, Rage Against the Machine, we were playing this weird stuff. You know people would come to shows on our college campus and look at us like, "This is really good but I don't know if I get it." Like, we would play a show and a couple people would walk out when I started screaming because this is the south, it's kind of like, "What are they doing?"[4]

In his bands Simply Waynes and Satchel, Carter recalls performing covers of Radiohead, Weezer, and Green Day. These bands, as well as Joe 747, were for fun rather than for money or a career. Morrell says, "We just did silly stuff with music just for fun because it was a hobby. . . . There was no thought in our brains that we could become professional musicians. Even if we thought we were good enough, I didn't really think, 'Yeah, I'll be doing this for a living.'"[5] The founding members of Emery did not consider pursuing music in this way until most of them had

[2] Carter, "Emery: A Southern Story of Unlikely Success."
[3] Carter, "Emery: A Southern Story of Unlikely Success."
[4] Aaron Lunsford, *Emery: The Unlikely Masters of Rock* (Seattle: Bad Christian Media, 2017), 61.
[5] Carter, "Emery: A Southern Story of Unlikely Success."

graduated from college in 2001. At that time, Morrell, Svendsen, Carter, and Shelton formed Emery and decided to move somewhere with better opportunities. They considered cities with status as regional hubs for certain subgenres, such as Lawrence, Kansas, a central location for early emo bands like The Get Up Kids, The Appleseed Cast, and others. Emery ultimately decided to move to Seattle, Washington in hopes of joining the flourishing rock scene there, headed by bands such as Nirvana and Pearl Jam. Days before the band left, Svendsen informed them that he no longer wanted to move with them and play in the band, so Greer native Joel Green replaced Svendsen on bass. Seth Studley, former drummer of Simply Waynes and Satchel, asked to join Emery as well. Studley replaced Shelton as Emery's drummer, so Shelton moved up front to play guitar and join Morrell as a second vocalist. This choice ultimately led to the band's two-vocalist texture and resulting vocal polyphony.

Once in Seattle, the band began playing concerts and making connections. Green and Carter got jobs at a Guitar Center where they met fellow coworker Josh Head. Head joined Emery to help with playing shows and recording, but later added screaming vocals and played keyboard for the band. He also provided a source of high energy that fueled the crowd at concerts. Head introduced the group to Jon Dunn, a member of Seattle band Flying or Falling. In 2002, Emery toured with Flying or Falling and released their first EP, *The Columbus EEP Thee*.

In 2003, Emery contacted Ed Rose of Black Lodge Recording in Eudora, Kansas to record their first album, *The Weak's End*, in Rose's studio. On Carter's *Break It Down Podcast*, Rose recalled memories of recording the album for Emery: "The things that stick with me are a bunch of driven, hard-working kids from South Carolina that came in well-rehearsed and prepared to make a record, and worked their butts off during the process."[6] After the album was

[6] Carter, "Ed Rose Producer of Emery's The Weak's End (S3 Ep6)," *Break It Down Podcast*, podcast audio, Mar. 27, 2016. https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/ed-rose-producer-of-emerys-the.

finished, Emery mailed a copy to Seattle for Dunn to listen to while working in the Tooth & Nail Records mailroom. Though Dunn had mentioned several times to Brandon Ebel that he should sign Emery to Tooth & Nail Records, Ebel brushed him off. One early morning while Dunn was listening to the song "Walls," Ebel came into work and heard Emery for the first time. "I remember the exact moment. It's burned in my mind," he remembers.[7] He loved the song, so he told Dunn to immediately go up to the A&R office and sign Emery to the label. Despite offers from other labels, including Victory Records and The Militia Group, Emery ultimately accepted the deal from Tooth & Nail Records with Dunn as their A&R representative.[8] *The Weak's End* was released on Tooth & Nail Records in January of 2004. Ebel later said about Emery, "They're a flagship Tooth & Nail band. . . . They're everything that we'd want in a band on our label."[9]

When Studley decided to leave the band in 2004, he was replaced by drummer Dave Powell, formerly of the band Bowels of Judas. In August of 2005, Emery released *The Question*, their second album on Tooth & Nail Records. This album sold 200,000 copies, a record-setting number for the label at the time.[10] In 2006, Green left the band for other pursuits, and Shelton became Emery's bassist while still singing vocals with Morrell.[11]

Emery released more EPs and albums on Tooth & Nail Records, including *I'm Only a Man* (2007), the *While Broken Hearts Prevail* EP (2008), *...In Shallow Seas We Sail* (2009), and *We Do What We Want* (2011). The band also released special edition albums, compilation albums, Christmas albums, music videos, and appeared on Fearless Records' *Punk Goes 80's* and *Punk Goes 90's* compilation albums with covers of Bonnie Tyler's "Holding Out for a Hero"

[7] Carter, "Labeled: Who Is Brandon Ebel?."
[8] Lunsford, *Emery*, 247.
[9] Hayne Griffin, *Emery: A Film*. DVD. Directed by Hayne Griffin. Seattle: Tooth & Nail Records, 2007.
[10] Lunsford, *Emery*, 259–260.
[11] "Emery Lose Bassist." *Ultimate Guitar*, Sept. 20, 2006. https://www.ultimate-guitar.com/news/general_music_news/emery_lose_bassist.html.

and Toad the Wet Sprocket's "All I Want." Emery toured with fellow Tooth & Nail Records bands Underoath and August Burns Red, groups who influenced Emery like Zao, and another band known for their use of two vocalists, Taking Back Sunday. Emery appeared on stages at Cornerstone, Vans Warped Tour, and the Zumiez Couch Tour.

Shelton took a hiatus from the band in 2011 before the recording of *We Do What We Want*, Emery's final album on Tooth & Nail Records. At the end of their contract, the band decided to release music independently. Carter, Morrell, and Svendsen founded BadChristian, an evangelistic company that releases podcasts, hosts touring events, and signs bands to their record label, BC Music. BadChristian describes themselves as:

> a thriving community that focuses on interacting with culture from an alternative Christian point of view. We do this by being brutally transparent, entertaining, and creative. The BadChristian community has grown rapidly because of partnerships with independent artists, podcasters, and writers, who by fueling the BadChristian movement, are able to build and sustain their careers.[12]

Shelton returned to the band for *You Were Never Alone*, an Indiegogo campaign-funded album released in 2015 on BC Music, and an acoustic tour. Emery released a live album from this acoustic tour, as well as an 8-bit version of *The Question* and the album *Revival: Emery Classics Reimagined*.[13] This latter album is a collection of Emery songs re-arranged and produced by Chris Keene, a touring guitarist for the band.[14] Carter and Morrell formed a side-project called Matt & Toby and released two albums, a self-titled album (2012) and *I Quit Church* (2017). Shelton also released solo albums, *Life and Death* (2014) and *Sensation* (2017). Emery's most recent album, *Eve*, was released in November 2018, also on BC Music. Carter hosts the Tooth &

[12] "About." *BadChristian*, accessed March 14, 2019. http://www.badchristian.com/about/.
[13] 8-bit music, also called "chip music" or "chiptune," is synthesized electronic music made up of data small enough to fit onto computer chips in early video game cartridges. This signature sound makes this version of *The Question* sound as if it is from a video game.
[14] Matthew Carter, Josh Head, Chris Keene, Toby Morrell, Dave Powell, Devin Shelton. Interview with Trenton Worsham. *Soundlink Magazine*, Dec. 7, 2017. https://youtu.be/1zRMwiYWoRU.

Nail Records Podcast *Labeled Podcast* and is currently releasing episodes detailing the history of Christian rock.

Emery as Christian Rock

The defining factor that makes rock Christian may be the lyrics of a song. Brian Schill in his discussion of crossover Christian rock observes:

> Perhaps the most telling feature of Christian rock that has remained from its origins to today is the emphasis it places on pious lyrics; that is, as an industry CCM is the only popular music genre that looks exclusively to the lyrical content of its artists for classification. Indeed, in terms of sound there is Christian punk, pop, country, hard rock, and metal; the unifying factor in each of these dissimilar styles, the component that makes them CCM generically, is their lyrical focus: Christ.[15]

Yet, as Schill later points out, this distinction falls short of creating a stable definition of the subgenre. By this distinction, the Beatles' "Let It Be," with its lyrics "Mother Mary comes to me," may qualify as a Christian rock song. Many would most likely disagree with this claim, including Christian rock researcher Mark Joseph, who points out:

> The term *Christian music* raises all sorts of questions. For example, if a Christian individual sings love songs, would the songs be considered "Christian music"? If a non-Christian sings "Christian" lyrics, does that constitute "Christian" music? If a Christian records a "Christian" song for a "secular" label, is the song a "Christian" song? The lack of a clear definition illustrates the problems that arise when the word *Christian* is applied as an adjective to *things*.[16]

Joseph proposes that this distinction between "Christian" and "secular" should be thrown out altogether, and music "should instead be viewed by believers as either consistent with the Bible

[15] Brian Schill, "The Impossibility of Negation: A Theoretical Defense of 'Cross-Over' Christian Rock." *Journal of Religion and Popular Culture* 16, no. 1 (Summer 2007): n.p.
[16] Mark Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion: Why People of Faith Abandoned Rock Music and Why They're Coming Back* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 177–178.

and therefore honoring to God, or inconsistent with the Bible and therefore dishonoring to God—period."[17]

This proposal may work for casual Christian listeners, but it still evades a universal definition for the subgenre of Christian rock. Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck propose three categories of CCM based upon the intention of its creators. These three categories are Separational, Integrational, and Transformational.[18] Separational CCM "attempts to maintain a stark distinction between Christian and secular culture while at the same time remaining committed to reaching non-Christians and making converts."[19] CCM of this type, usually nominated for Gospel Music Awards and played on Christian radio stations, may include musicians such as Jeremy Camp who mimic secular adult contemporary styles.[20] Integrational CCM musicians "[develop] new rationales for their music that would allow them to integrate themselves, as well as their Christian beliefs, into mainstream culture."[21] Music of this type may span many styles and includes Amy Grant, Switchfoot, P.O.D., Underoath, Demon Hunter, Mewithoutyou, and many others.[22] The final type of CCM, Transformational, has a more ambiguous description:

> Transformational CCM, rooted in an amalgam of the mediating positions between the separational and integrational extremes and drawing on a particular set of theological and aesthetic assumptions concerning the nature of God and the purposelessness of art, has as its goal not to enter or to withdraw from mainstream culture but to enable its transformation. The end result is a music stripped of its utilitarian purposes and rendered valuable only through its ability to manifest both truth and quality. Art no longer serves religion but is drawn inextricably into it.[23]

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[17] Joseph, *The Rock & Roll Rebellion*, 178.
[18] Jay R. Howard and John M. Streck, *Apostles of Rock: The Splintered World of Contemporary Christian Music* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1999), 16.
[19] Howard and Streck, *Apostles of Rock*, 16.
[20] Andrew Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life: Inside the Phenomenon of Christian Rock* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 2006), 62.
[21] Howard and Streck, *Apostles of Rock*, 16.
[22] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 63.
[23] Howard and Streck, *Apostles of Rock*, 17.

Andrew Beaujon interprets this definition to include "music for misfits, people who struggle with their faith but still attempt to bring 'salt and light' to the world. . . . [Transformational musicians] liberally season their work with accounts of personal struggles and failures."[24] Many Christian punk and emo bands who released albums on Tooth & Nail Records, including Emery, Starflyer 59, and Pedro the Lion, fall into this category.[25] Pedro the Lion, formed by David Bazan in 1995, released their *Whole EP* on Tooth & Nail Records in 1997. The album's lyrics contain honest accounts of sad situations inspired by Bazan's personal experiences. In future albums, Bazan embraced a creative freedom that allowed his lyrics to transition to explicit language and imagery. These lyrics caused controversy that has essentially blacklisted him from the Christian music festivals at which he formerly performed.[26] Pedro the Lion's 2018 single "Model Homes" and other songs voice the despair and struggle that the lead singer and former Christian experiences with his faith.

Emery's Christian faith appears in their music in an even more complex way. In a 2016 interview, Morrell made a statement that echoes the Transformational attitude presented by Howard and Streck: "Art in general should be influential, but the intersection of art and faith and how they melt with each other should be natural. Faith should not use art as a tool to promote itself. . . . [Y]ou shouldn't use art for the sole reason [of promoting] your Christianity or faith."[27] However, Morrell points out that his idea of what he should do as a Christian musician has changed throughout his time in Emery:

> I would say the biggest change that happened for me is growing up [in an extremely] conservative charismatic church background. I thought from the

[24] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 63.
[25] Beaujon, *Body Piercing Saved My Life*, 63.
[26] Keegan Bradford, "What the Return of Pedro the Lion Means for David Bazan, Patron Saint of Skeptics and Doubters," *Christ and Pop Culture*, November 29, 2017. https://christandpopculture.com/return-pedro-lion-means-david-bazan-patron-saint-skeptics-doubters/.
[27] Aaron Ross, "An Interview with Toby Morrell from Emery and Bad Christian," *Ecclesiam*, May 3, 2016, http://www.ecclesiam.com/2016/05/emery-interview/.

> beginning that on the stage we needed to say we believe in Jesus Christ and really proclaim those things. I would've said 15 years ago that I was proclaiming Christianity, that God was giving me a chance to use the microphone to proclaim His glory and who He was. After touring for years and years I realized that when I am up on stage saying that "we are Emery and I want you guys to know that we are Christians and we believe in Jesus Christ," that immediately changed the whole moment to "I want to sell you something." But that didn't reflect anything about what I was like off stage. I live like a Christian off stage, but what I did on stage was just saying something real quick. I might as well have gone up there and said that I like ham sandwiches and you might not. That didn't do anything for the gospel, except that it probably encouraged some Christians and turned non-Christians off.[28]

In 2017, Morrell also criticized the commercialization of Christian music and the promotion of a watered-down version of Christianity:

> The Church used to be known for art, whether it be paintings or the Sistine Chapel or some amazing music that came out. Now, I just feel like we're very commercial and we set a really low bar and we just try to hit people with the lowest common denominator. And I don't know if it talks about Jesus that much. . . . Americanized Christianity just feels too safe. It's like trying to protect everybody from everything so you don't have any original thought. And that's the worst feeling in the world to me. Too many good musicians in the Church, and too many incredibly talented people are being told, "This is what you're allowed to do. Talk about climbing the mountain or being in the valley." It's not art. It just isn't. It's a product to sell. And it just devastates me when you have this much talent, this much money, this much influence – to not take chances just seems silly.[29]

In summary, Morrell believes in making bold choices in artistic expression, while also strategizing their inclusion of a Christian message. Emery's three most recent full-length releases prominently reflect this belief. *Eve*, released in 2018, both visually and aurally presents the band members' progressive Christian beliefs that are expressed on their podcast *Bad Christian*. *Eve*'s cover art features a naked woman, presumed to be Eve from the book of Genesis, sitting on a forest floor. Her head is covered, a rosary hangs around her neck, she is holding a candle, and

[28] Ross, "An Interview with Toby Morrell from Emery and Bad Christian."
[29] Scott Fryberger, "Emery 2017 Interview with JesusFreakHideout.com," *Jesus Freak Hideout*, June 7, 2017, https://www.jesusfreakhideout.com/interviews/Emery2017.asp.

she is surrounded by what appears to be pages torn out of a Bible. This art was so controversial with fans that Emery created "Parental Advisory: Explicit Content" stickers to ship with the album. On October 4, 2018 they tweeted, "We will be including this sticker in every Eve package sent out. We think it's hilarious and you should too. Use it to cover her bum, or put it wherever you'd like, we don't care. #censoremery #explicitcontent #christiansgonewild"[30]

Eve's lyrics address God, sin, and a struggle of knowing right from wrong. A jaded attitude toward traditional church structure, dishonesty from religious officials, and ignorance of the reality of sin are common themes throughout the album. The song "People Always Ask Me If We're Gonna Cuss in an Emery Song" challenges those who use trivial standards of morality, such as avoiding explicit language, to claim superiority. Another song, "2007 Clarksville High Volleyball State Champs Gay Is OK," addresses the acceptance of homosexuality by Christians.

The album *You Were Never Alone*, released in 2015, may be the Emery album that is most easily classifiable as Christian rock since it is a Biblical concept album. Each song is about a specific story or person in the Bible, as Morrell detailed on Carter's *Break It Down Podcast* in October 2015. Figure 3.1 lists each Biblical event or figure that inspired the songs in *You Were Never Alone*. This artistic choice was intentional, as Morrell stated in an interview: "This record really feels like it's pushing the boundaries of what people tend to think about Christian music or music that is about our God. I really like stuff like that. My biggest critique of Christian music [is] it's safe, it's not dangerous, and it doesn't push any boundaries, and it [really] seems artistically stale."[31] The album art was not quite as controversial as that for *Eve*, since the cover of *You Were Never Alone* features photos of the band and their fans on a table next to a guitar,

[30] Toby Morrell, Twitter post, Oct. 4, 2018, https://twitter.com/OfficialEmery/status/1048001275160416257.
[31] Fryberger, "Emery 2017 Interview with JesusFreakHideout.com."

drumsticks, a microphone, and other concert gear. This represents support from Emery's fans through the IndieGoGo campaign that funded the creation of the album.

Song Title	**Biblical event/figure**
Rock, Pebble, Stone	Jesus baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus goes into the wilderness
Thrash	Stoning of Stephen
Hard Times	Samson and Delilah
The Beginning	Adam and Eve
The Less You Say	Peter speaks to Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane
Pink Slip	Moses parts the Red Sea
To the Deep	Noah's Ark, Abraham
What's Stopping You	Mary and Joseph
Go Wrong Young Man	Paul on the road to Damascus
Taken for a Bath	King David and Bathsheba
Salvatore Wryhta	Jesus is led to the cross
Alone	Jesus hangs on the cross

Fig. 3.1: Lyrical subjects of songs on *You Were Never Alone*.

Emery's 2011 album *We Do What We Want* prominently features a Bible on the cover. When asked about the meaning behind it, Morrell answered:

> Most people would say we're a Christian band. I really don't like the label because I feel that that means only Christians can like the music. It's such a hard label. It's not like people who play jazz music can only be liked by people who like jazz. I don't know, we wanted to do something that challenged people a little bit with the artwork. I felt like it was to show that we're going to do what we want to do. We've been here for so long that it doesn't matter what people think. We're just going to write the music that we love and if you like it then that's awesome. We had different artwork ideas and we liked that one because it shows what we feel about America and ourselves as Christians. We hold up a bible, but most times, we do what we want. The society that we live in does what they want and then [they] put on a clean face and hold up a bible.[32]

The first song on the album, "Cheval Glass," is about this deception, describing a person who presents themselves as pious and sinless to the world, but their reflection in the mirror reveals the

[32] Zack Zarrillo, "PropertyOfZack Interview: Emery," *PropertyOfZack*, March 16, 2011. http://propertyofzack.com/post/3901924966/propertyofzack-interview-emery.

truth of who they are.[33] "I Never Got To See The West Coast" tells the story of someone struggling with loneliness and thoughts of suicide. Most of the songs on the album explore a struggle with faith and fear of death, such as "Fix Me" which features the words "fix me, Jesus, fix me" and "fix me, Father, fix me."

These three albums, *Eve*, *You Were Never Alone*, and *We Do What We Want*, each reflect Emery's Christianity in a way that is creative and complex. The lyrics of this Christian music are similar to Pedro the Lion and other Transformational Christian musicians that challenge stereotypes about Christian rock. However, lyrical themes of Emery's earlier albums are more representative of a different but related subgenre: emo.

Emery as Emo

Despite the fact that Emery promotes Christianity at their concerts, their early music is much less blatantly Christian. One may not even associate Emery's early music with Christian rock without knowing the members' religious affiliation. Emery's pre-2011 albums include *The Weak's End* (2004), *The Question* (2005), *I'm Only A Man* (2007), *While Broken Hearts Prevail* (2008), and *...In Shallow Seas We Sail* (2009). These early albums contain lyrical themes about girls, relationships, and broken hearts rather than Christian faith.[34] These themes are much more common to the subgenre of emo than to Christian rock.

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[33] Toby Morrell, "Emery 'We Do What We Want' Podcast-Episode #1," *Tooth & Nail Podcast*, Podcast audio, April 15, 2011, http://kamikazeproductions.net/tooth/casts.html?fbclid=IwAR3m_EUEd5VLB7e66U1CxG3i0t-Bm_M_DvsuRn6D6pcRmSj5X7ZP2Lqp4po.

[34] John Kary, *Acoustic Tour: Lawrence, KS July 19, 2007*, DVD, Directed by John Kary, Seattle: Tooth & Nail Records, 2007.; Toby Morrell, "Emery 'We Do What We Want' Podcast-Episode #2," *Tooth & Nail Podcast*, Podcast audio, April 21, 2011. http://kamikazeproductions.net/tooth/casts.html?fbclid=IwAR3m_EUEd5VLB7e66U1CxG3i0t-Bm_M_DvsuRn6D6pcRmSj5X7ZP2Lqp4po.

Emo, like Christian rock, is hard to define. It is equally as challenging to decide what music qualifies as emo and what does not. According to Andy Greenwald, "emo" describes music that is emotional. Greenwald and Morrell have both asked a variation of the same question: "Isn't all music emotional?"[35] Greenwald explains that emo is less about a single musical style and more about an expression and understanding of one's emotions, whether as a musician or a listener:

> Originally, emo was short for "emocore," a strain of hardcore punk that was notable for its obsession with feelings (as opposed to politics, anger, and smashing stuff up). Then it started to be applied to bands that weren't punk, to fashion trends, to sad-eyed kids in the back of class. It's always been mildly derisive, a term used by haters and critics to dismiss something that's overly weepy, self-indulgent, or unironic.[36]

Greenwald further states that emo "[signifies] a particular relationship between a fan and a band. It's the desire to turn a monologue into a dialogue, to be a part of the art that affects you and to connect to it on every possible level."[37] This element of emo is what ties Emery to the subgenre. Emery's bold stylistic choices in their music combine with an honest discussion with their fans about their Christian faith, something that is very personal to them.

Emery's early emo style was intentional, as confirmed by Shelton in a 2009 interview about how their style has evolved:

> Originally, we wanted to incorporate an indie rock/emo sound with a hardcore sound. We were big fans of bands ranging from Mineral, Sunny Day Real Estate, Pedro the Lion to Zao and Hopesfall to 90s rock like Tool, Nirvana, Soundgarden, etc. . . So I think our diverse taste in music came through when we wrote. Our earliest music had more of an emo/indie feel and eventually transformed to our

[35] Andy Greenwald, *Nothing Feels Good: Punk Rock, Teenagers, and Emo* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2003), 2.; In the *Break It Down Podcast* on the song "Rock, Pebble, Stone," Morrell asks, "Aren't all lyrics emotional?" Carter, "Emery's 'Rock, Pebble, Stone' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep1)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 25, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-1-emerys-rock-pebble-stone-from-you-were-never-alone.
[36] Greenwald, *Nothing Feels Good*, 2.
[37] Greenwald, *Nothing Feels Good*, 4.

> more current sound. I was always a huge fan of good vocals and harmonies from R&B and other styles, so that has also had a huge impact on our music.[38]

Emery's early music prioritized artistic and emotional expression over promoting their Christian faith. The band evangelized through interactions with the audience and conversations with fans rather than through lyrical themes. Like many other Tooth & Nail Records bands, Emery's creative freedom allowed them to defy expectations of those who associated them with traditional Christian rock.

Emery's Transformational approach to their music, as opposed to other Christian musicians' Separational or Integrational approaches, is one major element of Emery's music that challenges stereotypes about Christian rock. This sincere expression of Christian faith through Emery's music and through their interactions with fans is similar to many other musicians associated with Tooth & Nail Records. Forms of vocal polyphony in Emery's music can be identified in other Christian rock music as well as secular emo, pop punk, and alternative rock. Identification and classification of this vocal polyphony will now be discussed.

[38] Steph, "Interview with Devin Shelton of Emery," *Addicted to Shows*, May 18, 2009, https://addicted2shows.com/2009/05/18/interview-with-devin-shelton-of-emery/.

Chapter 4

Analysis of Vocal Polyphony in Emery's Music

Style and Influences

The members of Emery grew up listening to mainstream and alternative rock and cite many of these bands as influences. These include Marilyn Manson, Weezer, Queen, Foo Fighters, Smashing Pumpkins, The Strokes, Coldplay, Pearl Jam, Tool, Nirvana, and Soundgarden.[1] Once in college, the future members of Emery were exposed to music more defined by the emo subgenre, such as Pedro the Lion, Sunny Day Real Estate, Brandtson, The Juliana Theory, Further Seems Forever, and Saves the Day.[2] These bands as well as metal acts Zao, Lutikriss

[1] David Biery, "Interview with Emery drummer Dave Powell," *PureGrainAudio*, May 14, 2009, https://puregrainaudio.com/interviews/emery.; Steph, "Interview with Devin Shelton of Emery," *Addicted to Shows*, May 18, 2009, https://addicted2shows.com/2009/05/18/interview-with-devin-shelton-of-emery/.; Carter, "Emery's 'Rock, Pebble, Stone' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep1)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 25, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-1-emerys-rock-pebble-stone-from-you-were-never-alone.; Carter, "Devin Shelton (S4 Ep17)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, Jan. 12, 2017, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/devin-shelton-s4-ep17.

[2] Aaron Lunsford, *Emery: The Unlikely Masters of Rock* (Seattle: Bad Christian Media, 2017), 55–58.; Carter, "Emery's 'To the Deep' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep7)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 30, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-7-to-the-deep-from-emerys-you-were-never-alone.; Carter, "Emery's 'Go Wrong Young Man' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep9)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast

(later known as Norma Jean), Hopesfall, and Stretch Arm Strong, each have connections to the Christian rock scene and influenced Emery's music.[3] Shelton has also stated that he enjoys listening to R&B, especially Boyz II Men.[4] He believes the subgenres most influential on Emery's non-traditional song forms were hardcore and emo.[5]

Morrell and Shelton are the two main vocalists of Emery. The band refers to Morrell's rough vocal timbre as "the plumber" and Shelton's smooth vocal timbre as "the angel."[6] In an interview with music theorist Brad Osborn, Carter described their songwriting process:

> The songs almost always start with an idea from one person, (Devin, Toby, or myself)—usually something as simple as a verse and a chorus framework and usually some melody or lyrics. Then we try to collaborate with another person to criticize it and begin to shape a form and write more parts: intros, bridges, transitions etc. Then once it is shaped we try to show it to the whole band and make it an "arrangement" in terms of texture and feel (drum beats, guitar style etc.). Then we can really see what needs to change, be rewritten, or what new parts the song is asking for. It's almost as if once a song is started, it's more like discovering and decoding what the song already is or wants to be.[7]

Powell fills in drum parts towards the end of the songwriting process, though a few songs, such as "Everything That She Offered Me" from *Eve*, were composed beginning with Powell's drum parts.[8]

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audio, June 30, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-9-go-wrong-young-man-from-emerys-you-were-never-alone.

[3] Lunsford, *Emery*, 57–58.

[4] John Kary, *Acoustic Tour: Lawrence, KS July 19, 2007*, DVD, directed by John Kary (Seattle, WA: Tooth & Nail Records, 2007).

[5] Carter, "Devin Shelton + 'Salvatore Wryhta' from Emery's You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep10)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 30, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-10-salvatore-wtryhta-from-emerys-you-were-never-alone.

[6] Carter, "Devin Shelton + 'Salvatore Wryhta' from Emery's You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep10)."

[7] Brad Osborn, "Beyond Verse and Chorus: Experimental Formal Structures in Post-Millennial Rock Music" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 2010), 267.

[8] Carter, "New Emery Song Premiere Minus Vocals (Ep 129)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, Sept. 12, 2018, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/new-emery-song-premiere-minus-vocals-ep-129.

Emery aims to compose songs that are "aggressive and adventurous."[9] Carter searches for "complexity" both in the music that he writes himself and in the music of others.[10] He believes that this way of composing music is reflective of the band members' "adventurous spirit," which leads them to do things without question, such as move to Seattle. Just as the guys will "challenge each other to do crazy things," they also challenge each other to try new time signatures, chord progressions, key modulations, and song forms.[11] On making "adventurous" choices with their music, Carter has stated, "The best thing is just taking a bold move and just owning it, like with your personality, like with your stage presence, with your delivery. The confidence with which you do something really can buy you a lot and you can get [to] some adventurous places."[12] During the process of writing melodies, Morrell will sometimes shift into a different meter without realizing it until one of the other members of the band points it out.[13] He says, "If I can pull off a weird time signature and it feels good, I love that."[14]

Though the members of Emery have not extensively explained why they chose to have two main vocalists rather than just one, they acknowledge that it is their "claim to fame in some ways."[15] Head has stated, "It's just something we really like in music, harmonizing and the use of two voices. I wouldn't say it's something we came up with, I mean, certainly the Beatles did it with John Lennon and Paul McCartney. So yeah, it's just something we really like in music and

[9] Carter, "Devin Shelton + 'Salvatore Wryhta' from Emery's You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep10)."
[10] Toby Morrell, "Matt Carter joins us to talk about writing music and the new Emery record," *Song Rescue Podcast*, Podcast audio, Sept. 10, 2018, https://soundcloud.com/songrescue/matt-carter-joins-us-to-talk-about-writing-music-and-the-new-emery-record.
[11] Carter, "Devin Shelton + 'Salvatore Wryhta' from Emery's You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep10)."
[12] Carter, "Devin Shelton + 'Salvatore Wryhta' from Emery's You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep10)."
[13] Carter, "Emery's 'Pink Slip' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep6)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 30, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-6-pink-slip-from-emerys-you-were-never-alone.
[14] Carter, "Emery's 'Pink Slip' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep6)."
[15] Carter, "Emery's 'Pink Slip' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep6)."

something we wanted to make sure we added into ours."[16] Emery considers this element of their music their "defining trait" that is popular with fans.[17] Carter has noticed:

> All the way from your grandpa to the 16-year-old girl at the show, all they ever seem to talk about and hear is the vocals. . . So, we always feel like if there is a part that's just a guitar playing or something like that – usually most musicians or guitar players would think it's really awesome – we still put some singing on top of it. We just figure that's what everybody wants to hear. That's what we like to hear: music with a lot of singing. I feel like the music is just here to set the tone for the vocals.[18]

This two-vocalist polyphony is something that makes Emery's music more compositionally complex than one may expect from the subgenre.

Alternating Polyphony

Emery uses two forms of polyphony, which I have named **alternating polyphony** and **simultaneous polyphony**. **Alternating polyphony** occurs when two or more voices are heard, but they trade off lines in alternating vocals rather than sounding simultaneously.[19] Each of these voices can have varying degrees of independence, either completing each other's lyrical phrase or providing their own phrases. Each can also have varying degrees of overlap at the beginnings and endings of phrases. Emery utilizes these differences in degree of independence and overlap in order to create various effects. These effects are the **simple alternating effect**, **conversational effect**, **overlap effect**, **self-overlap effect**, **quickening effect**, **hocketing effect**, **sustained hocketing effect**, and **echo effect**.

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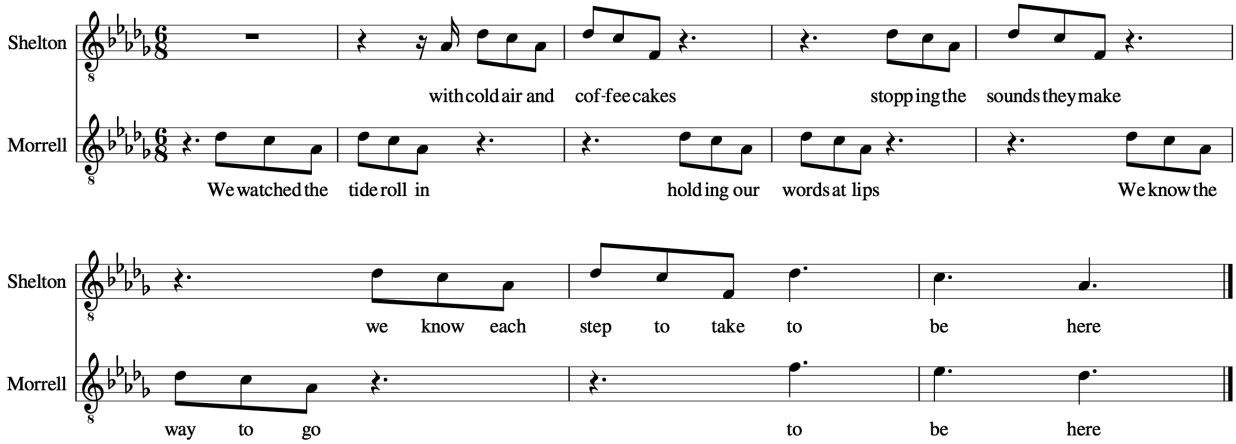
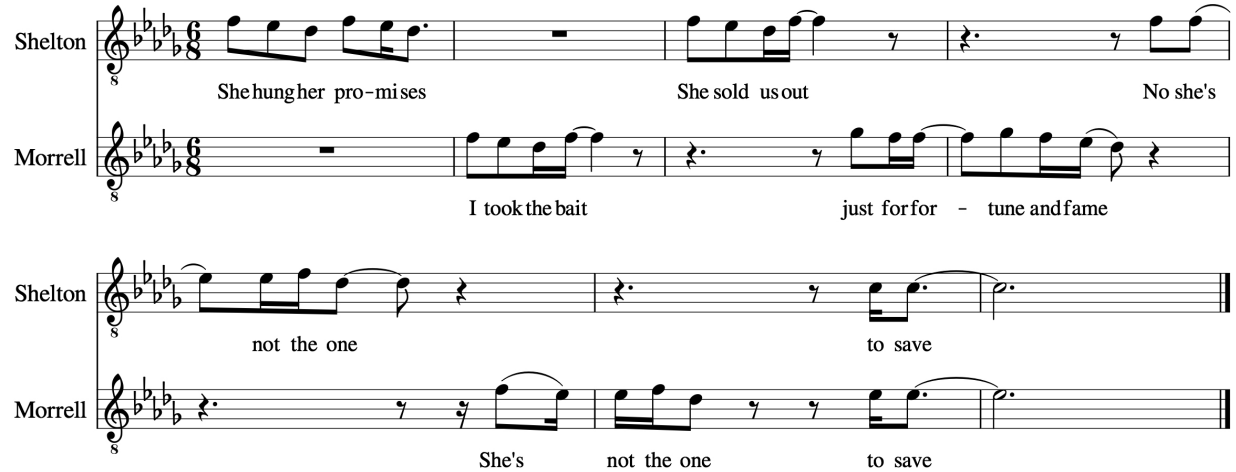
[16] Eric Pettersson, "Emery interview," *Indie Vision Music*, March 10, 2008, https://www.indievisionmusic.com/interviews/emery-2/.
[17] Emily Zemler, "Angels With Dirty Faces," *Alternative Press*, 209 (December 2005): 144.
[18] Zemler, "Angels With Dirty Faces," 146.
[19] In the Break It Down podcast on the song "Pink Slip," Toby refers to this polyphony type as "trade-off vocals." Carter, "Emery's 'Pink Slip' from You Were Never Alone (S1 Ep6)," *Break It Down Podcast*, Podcast audio, June 30, 2015, https://soundcloud.com/break-it-down-podcast/episode-6-pink-slip-from-emerys-you-were-never-alone.

The **simple alternating effect** contains no or negligible overlap between the voices. This can be heard in the song "Fractions" (Ex. 4.1) as well as "Crumbling" (Ex. 4.2).[20] Though both of these examples contain a slight bit of overlap (in measures 2 and 3, respectively), this overlap is negligible, since the attack points of the entering voice occur after the final attack point of the last note of the preceding voice. For the majority of these two examples, each voice enters following the preceding voice, working together to create one lyrical phrase. Both examples conclude in harmony, which is common for sections with alternating polyphony.



Ex. 4.1: "Fractions" (2004-5, 3:14). Simple alternating effect. Alternating polyphony with no overlap.



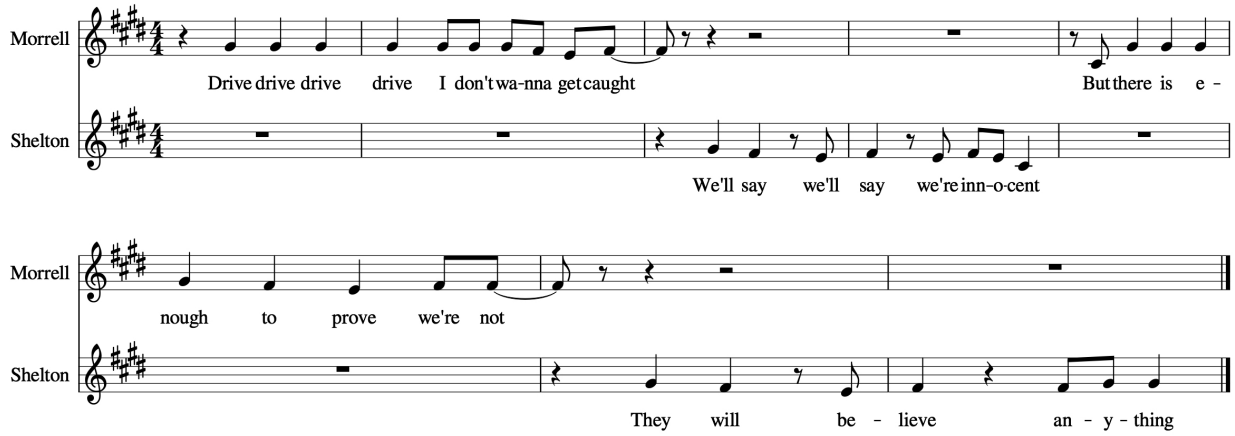
Ex. 4.2: "Crumbling" (2011-11, 1:37). Simple alternating effect. Alternating polyphony with no overlap.

[20] "Crumbling" appears on the deluxe edition of *We Do What We Want*.

Sometimes the alternating voices answer each other in conversation as with the **conversational effect**. In "Left With Alibis And Lying Eyes" (Ex. 4.3), Morrell and Shelton seem to have a conversation:

> "Drive, I don't wanna get caught."
> "We'll say we're innocent."
> "But there is enough to prove we're not."
> "They will believe anything."

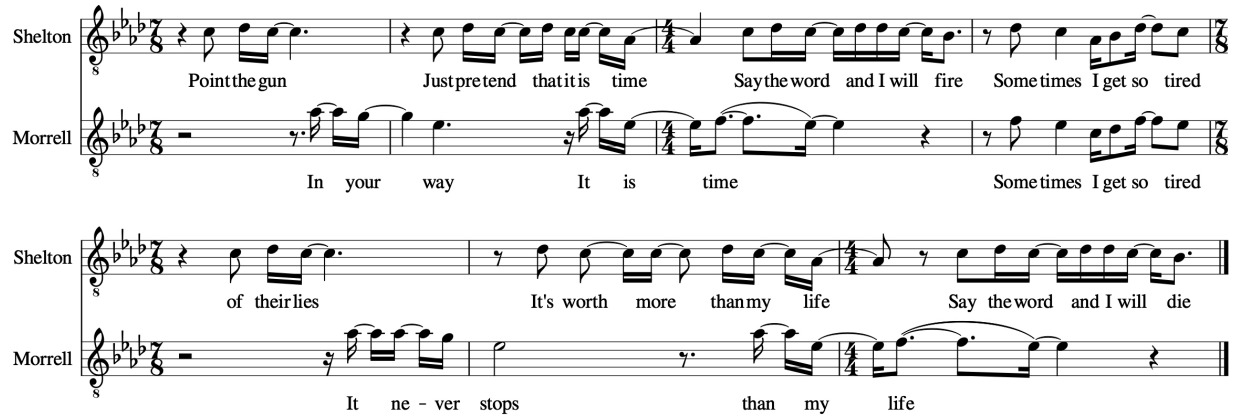
The strong accents on almost every syllable provide even more emphasis on the desperation presented in the lyrics.



Ex. 4.3: "Left With Alibis And Lying Eyes" (2005-5, 0:58). Conversational effect. Voices answer each other in conversation.

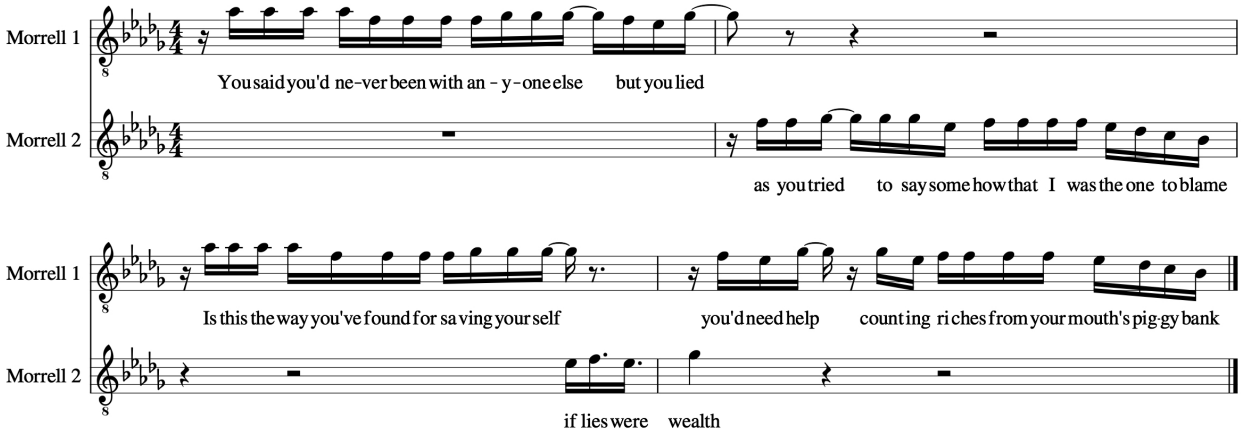
Alternating polyphony with an **overlap effect** can occur when one voice sustains as another enters, or the last few notes of the first voice's phrase are sounded as a second voice enters. This occurs at the very beginning of "The Weakest" (Ex. 4.4), which has varying degrees of overlap between the voices. Lyrics are completed or repeated in the second voice, and the two join together in parallel thirds for one measure at the end of the first four-measure phrase.

A small degree of overlap increases the listener's awareness of the use of more than one vocalist. Sometimes the band uses this overlap effect to their advantage in the case of recording tracks rather than performing live. This **self-overlap effect** where one vocalist overlaps their own



Ex. 4.4: "The Weakest" (2005-7, 0:01). Overlap effect. Voices have a higher degree of overlap than previous examples.

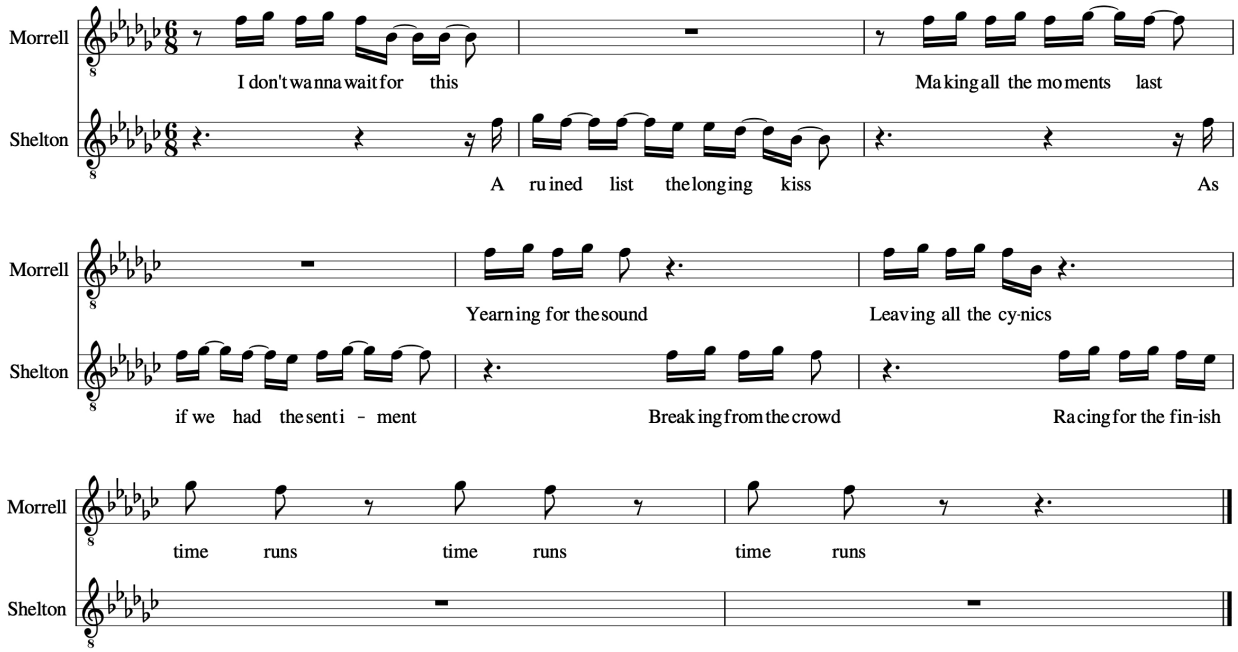
voice creates a sense of confusion. This happens in "Piggy Bank Lies" (Ex. 4.5), where the overlap of two vocal tracks allows Morrell to draw out the final syllables of phrases, rather than rushing into the next.



Ex. 4.5: "Piggy Bank Lies" (2009-10, 0:14). Self-overlap effect. Though the voices overlap, each voice is of the same vocalist.

The **quickening effect** increases the rate at which voices alternate, which creates tension. This happens in the bridge section of "Cutthroat Collapse" (Ex. 4.6). The voices alternate at a rate of one measure per statement from each voice, then quicken to half a measure per statement. This alternation creates a tension that leads into the screaming section of the song. This reoccurring section that transforms with each occurrence serves as both an introduction and what could be considered interludes or connecting sections between more important sections such as

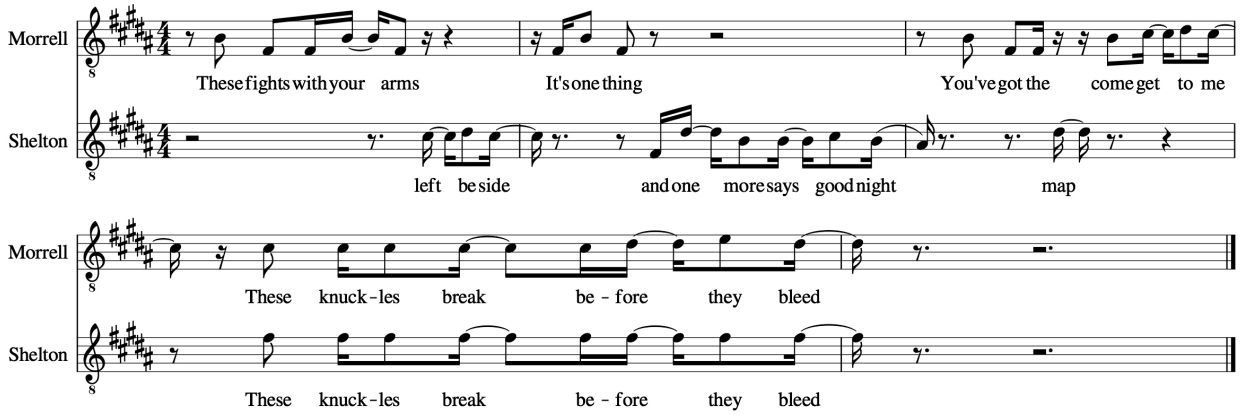
verse and chorus. The tension created through alternation in the bridge section transitions into the final occurrence of the screaming interlude, which functions as an outro at this point. The quickening of the singing voices reflects the message of the lyrics "time runs out" in the screaming vocals.



Ex. 4.6: "Cutthroat Collapse" (2009-1, 2:48). Quickening effect. Quick alternation builds tension.

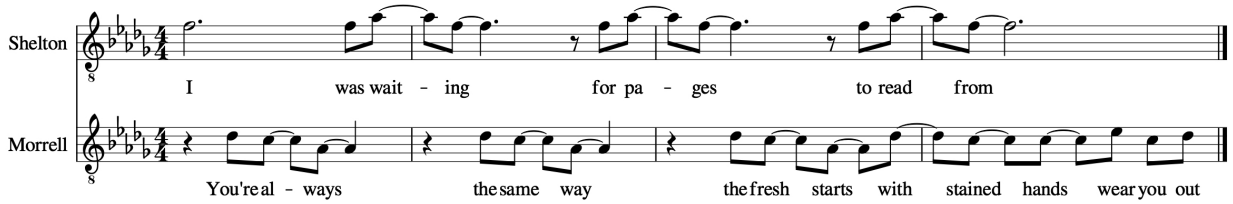
One could consider this quick alternating between two voices creating one lyrical idea or phrase a form of hocketing, a technique from Medieval polyphony that refers to the quick alternation of two or more voices. Though the traditional use of this term refers to an alternation where one voice rests while another takes over the phrase, my use of the term in reference to Emery's music includes examples of hocketing in alternating polyphony with no overlap, as well as examples where one voice takes over a phrase while the preceding voice sustains a note. My use of the term hocketing is also not concerned with lyrical dependence or independence; therefore, Emery's music contains examples of hocketing where each voice has their own independent lyrical phrase, rather than each completing one lyrical phrase.

This **hocketing effect** occurs most prominently in "Walls" (Ex. 4.7). Morrell and Shelton each trade words of a single lyrical phrase. Each section presented by Morrell or Shelton is less than a measure long. The shortest instance and the closest resemblance to Medieval hocketing occurs in measure 3, where Shelton sings the single word "map" for an eighth note as Morell holds an eighth rest. The phrase ends in harmony between Morrell and Shelton.



Ex. 4.7: "Walls" (2004-1, 1:11). Hocketing effect with no sustain.

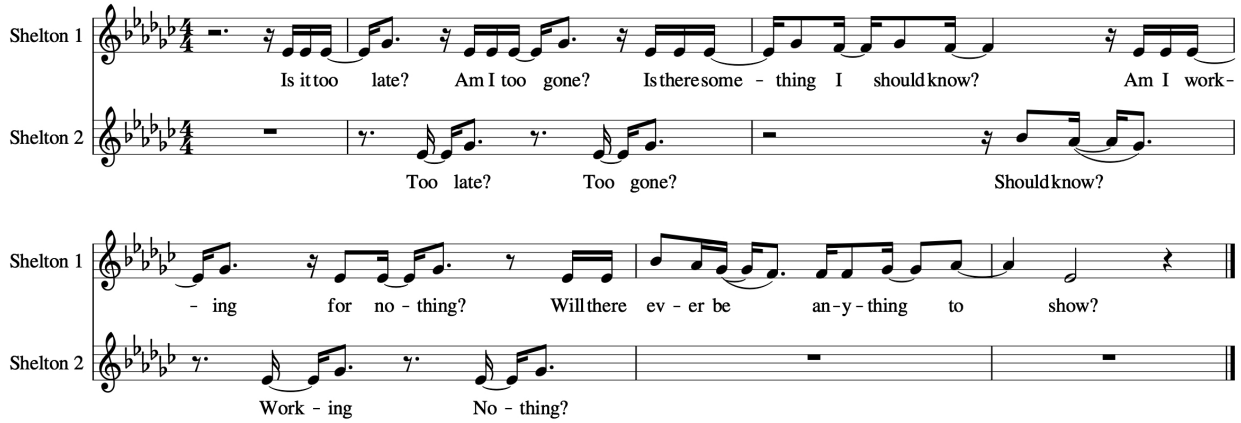
While the examples from "Cutthroat Collapse" and "Walls" are hocketing without sustain, an example of the **sustained hocketing effect** occurs in "Always Depends" (Ex. 4.8). This is also an example of two voices with lyrical independence; Morrell's phrase ("You're always the same way/the fresh starts with stained hands wear you out.") is not a completion of or complement to Shelton's phrase ("I was waiting for pages to read from.")



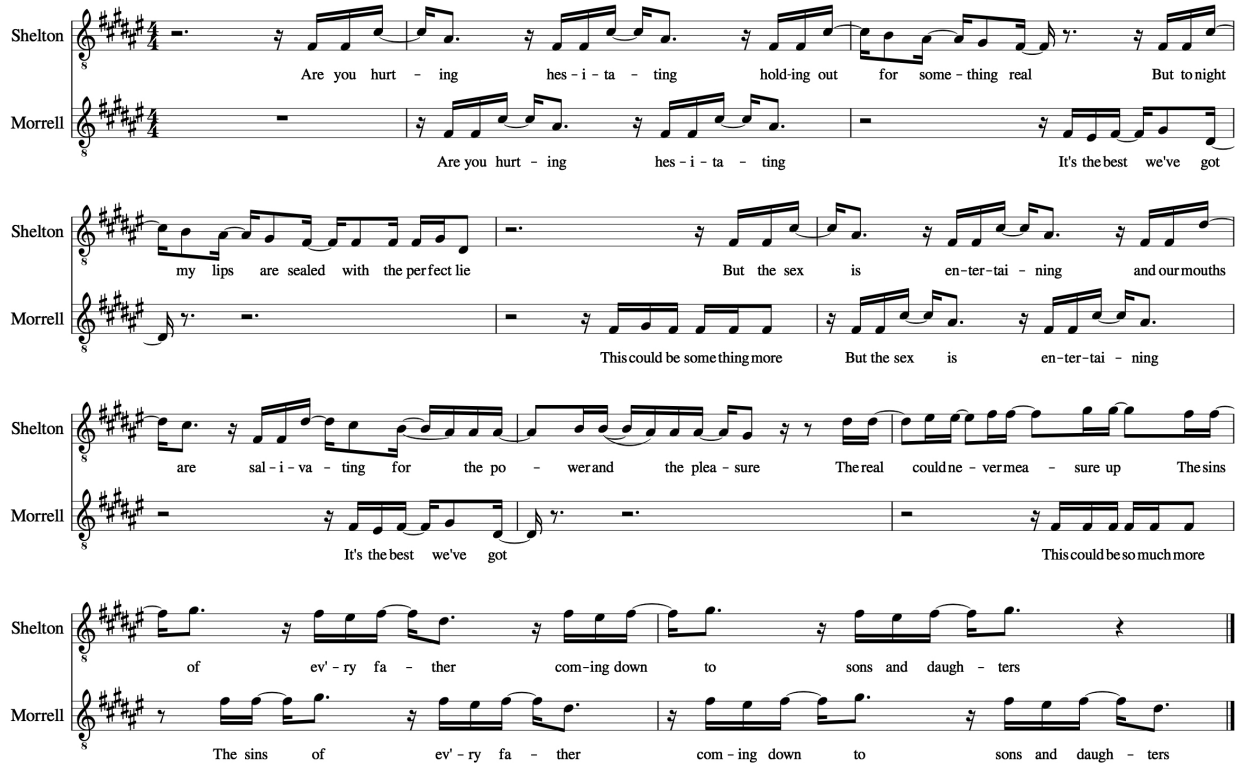
Ex. 4.8: "Always Depends" (2008-5, 0:43). Hocketing effect with sustain.

Some alternating polyphony occurs with echoes of words or phrases. Though this **echo effect** gives the echoing voice no lyrical independence, it is used to create tension, emphasize these words and phrases, or fill in rhythmic gaps. Sometimes, as in "Ten Talents" (Ex. 4.9), the

echoing voice is the same vocalist's recorded track dubbed as an echo. Other times, as with "Sins of Every Father" (Ex. 4.10), one voice provides an echo to another on the same pitches, two distinct vocalists sound rather than only one.



Ex. 4.9: "Ten Talents" (2008-4, 0:38). Echo effect. The second voice echoes the first, both provided by the same vocalist.

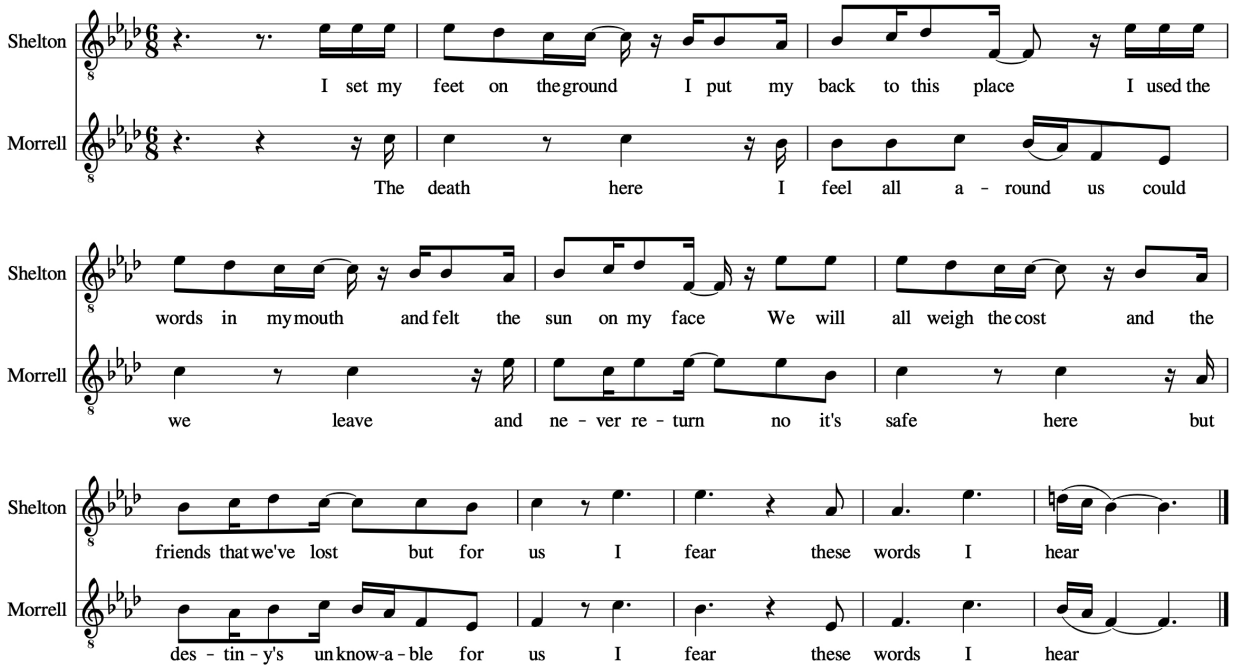


Ex. 4.10: "Sins of Every Father" (2018-15, 2:04). Echo effect. The second voice echoes the first. Each voice is a different vocalist.

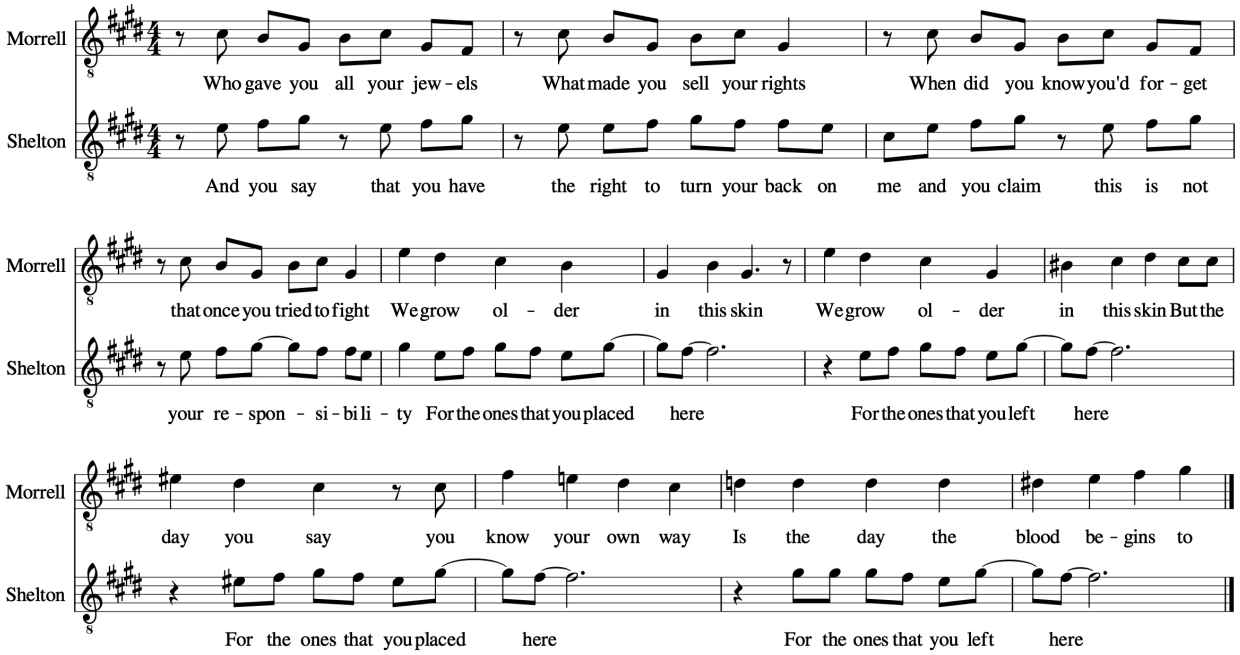
Simultaneous Polyphony

The second form of polyphony used by Emery is **simultaneous polyphony**. This polyphony occurs when two or more voices sing full lyrical phrases at the same time. The voices do not necessarily need to enter simultaneously, nor do they need to have completely independent lyrical phrases, though these factors do distinguish types of simultaneous polyphony. There are three types of simultaneous polyphony, distinguished by their lyrical dependence or independence. I have named these three types **contrasting**, **complementary**, and **retrospective**.

Contrasting simultaneous polyphony occurs when two or more voices sing independent lyrical phrases at the same time. This is exemplified in "To the Deep" (Ex. 4.11), where Shelton and Morrell each sing independent lyrical phrases at the same time, ending in harmony and propulsion into the final chorus. Another example is in "Alone" (Ex. 4.12), where Shelton and Morrell again have independent phrases, with Shelton's last subphrase repeating four times and changing pitches with each modulation.

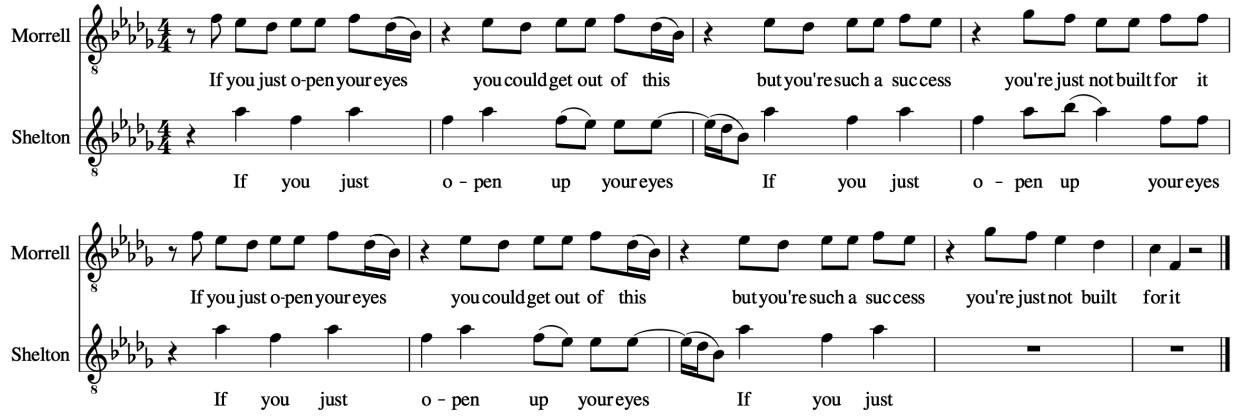


Ex. 4.11: "To the Deep" (2015-7, 2:34). Contrasting simultaneous polyphony.

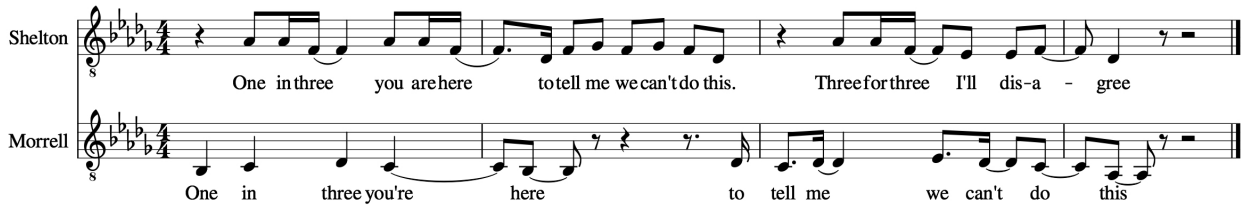


Ex. 4.12: "Alone" (2015-12, 0:37). Contrasting simultaneous polyphony.

In **complementary simultaneous polyphony**, multiple voices sing most or all of the same lyrics simultaneously, but in different rhythm. This is seen in "Miss Behavin'" (Ex. 4.13) where the phrase "If you just open your eyes" is emphasized in both voices. Complementary simultaneous polyphony is also seen at the first entrance of the vocals in "Fractions" (Ex. 4.14) where the phrase "One in three you are here to tell me we can't do this" is drawn out in one voice as the other follows with the phrase "Three for three I'll disagree."



Ex. 4.13: "Miss Behavin'" (2005-8, 1:48). Complementary simultaneous polyphony.



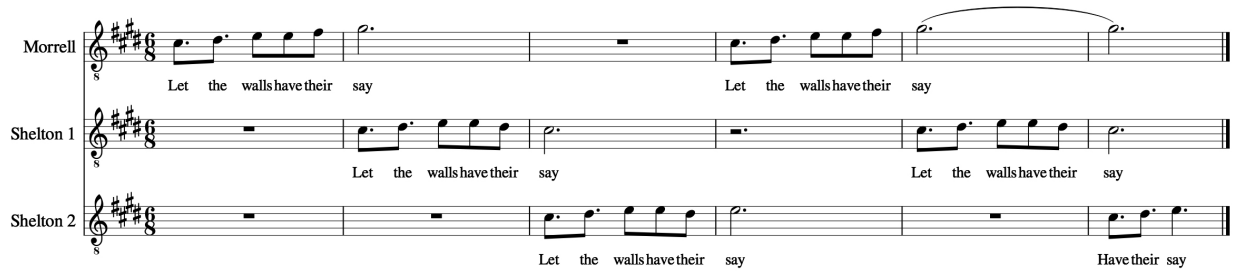
Ex. 4.14: "Fractions" (2004-5, 0:12). Complementary simultaneous polyphony.

Another example of complementary simultaneous polyphony is the use of **canons**, which occur a few times in Emery's music. One instance of this in "Walls" (Ex. 4.15) features one track of Morrell and two tracks of Shelton, creating a three-voice canon. This canon is not exact, since each voice lands on a different member of the C#m triad outlined in this section. Repetition of the phrase "Let the walls have their say," a variation on the phrase "If walls could talk," as well as panning Shelton's tracks to the left and right, respectively, gives the listener a sense that they are listening to walls around them whisper secrets. Another canon occurs in "Miss Behavin'" (Ex. 4.16). This canon is exact, since the second voice is the same track of Morrell's voice displaced by two measures. Both voices deliver the circular lyrical phrase "Sometimes I think you/I just need some time(s) I think you just. . . ." The last two measures of the second voice are cut off as the voices come together in harmony at the completion of the full lyrical phrase, "Sometimes I think you/I just need some time to get along without."

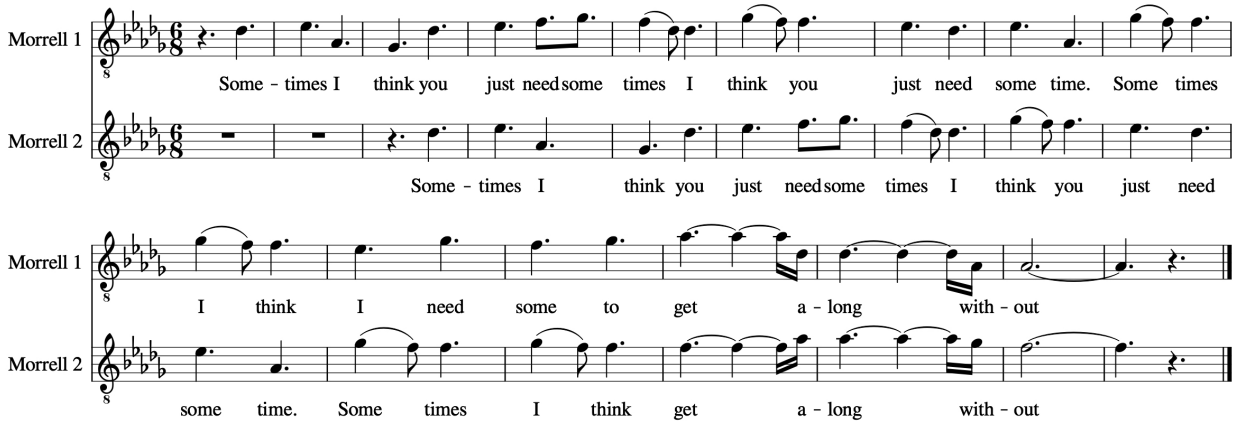
Retrospective simultaneous polyphony is used only once in Emery's music. It occurs when a previously heard section is sounded again at the same time as either a different previously heard section, such as a chorus, or an entirely new section. This type of simultaneous polyphony usually happens towards the end of a track, most often but not exclusively in a final chorus, and is an example of cumulative form as discussed by Mark Spicer.[21] This type of simultaneous polyphony is most often heard in emo and pop punk. The one instance in Emery's

[21] Mark Spicer, "(Ac)cumulative Form in Pop-Rock Music," *Twentieth-Century Music* 1, no. 1 (2004): 29.

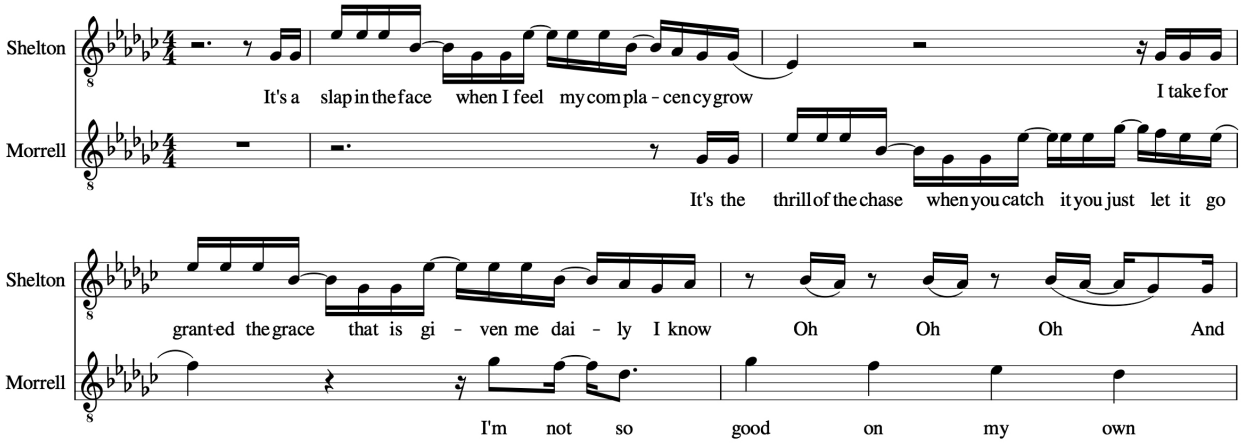
music occurs in “Ten Talents” (Ex. 4.17). The phrase “I’m not so good on my own” first appears towards the beginning of the song leading into the first chorus. It does not reappear before the second statement of the chorus; this example is the only other time this phrase is used, now combined with new lyrics in what could be considered a bridge section.



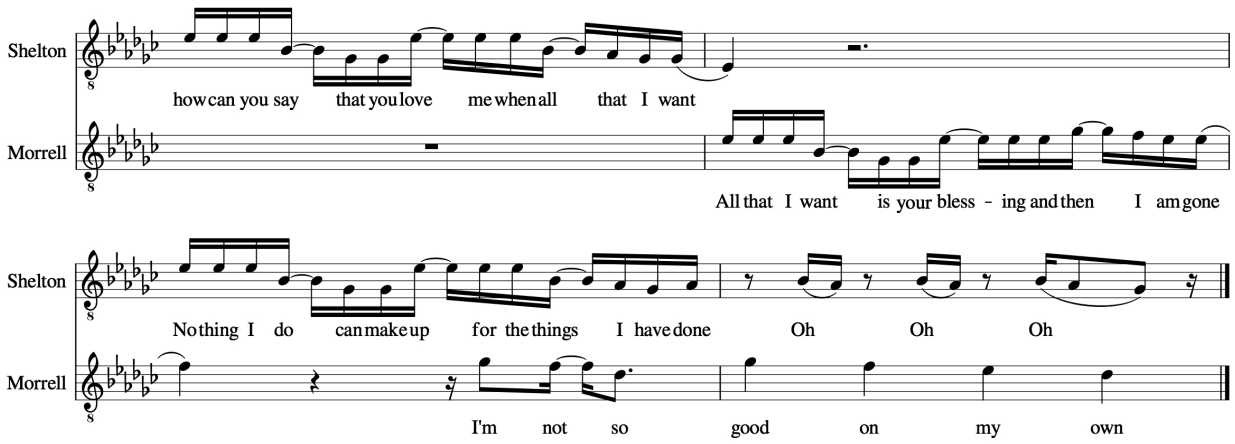
Ex. 4.15: “Walls” (2004-1, 2:33). A canon created by complementary simultaneous polyphony.



Ex. 4.16: “Miss Behavin’” (2005-8, 2:20). A canon created by complementary simultaneous polyphony.



Ex. 4.17: “Ten Talents” (2008-4, 2:27). The only example in Emery’s music of retrospective simultaneous polyphony.



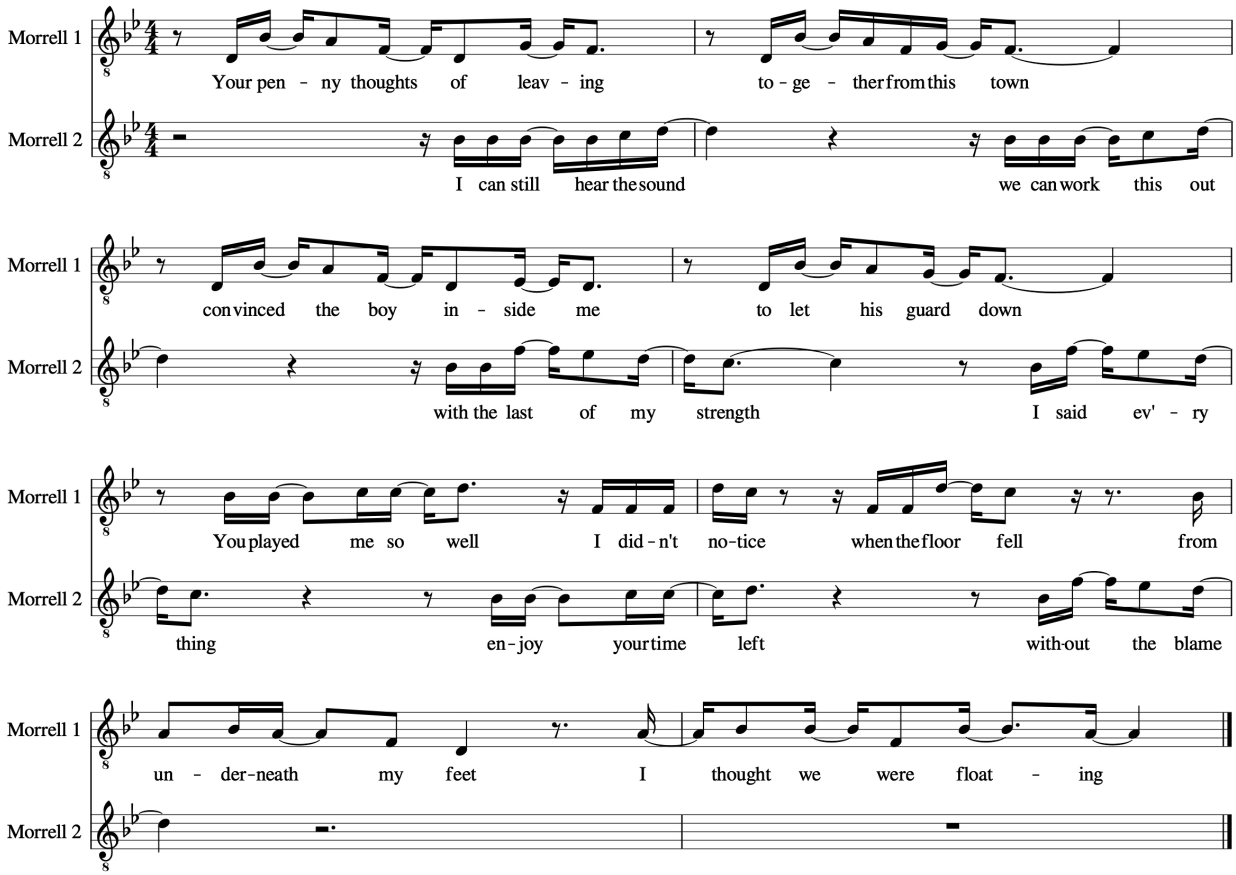
Ex. 4.17 cont.

Alternating and Simultaneous Polyphony Mixed

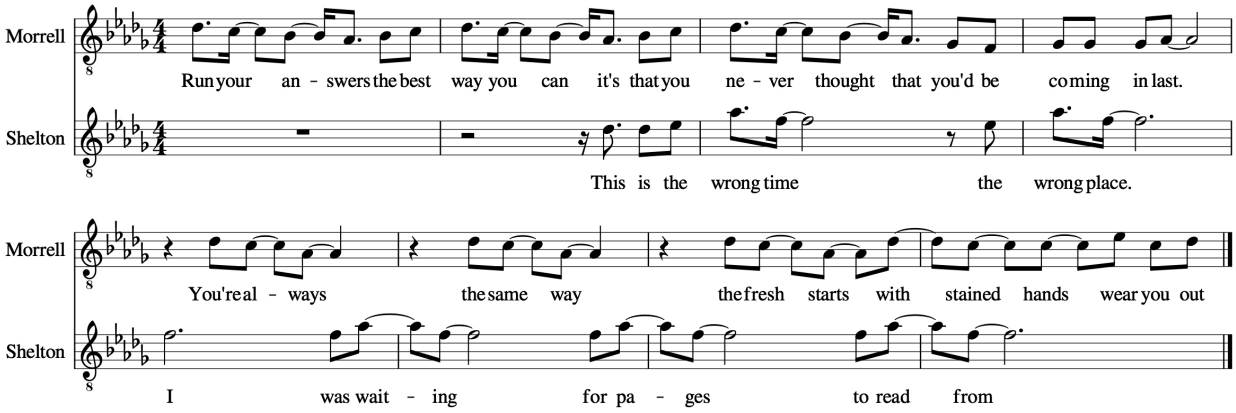
Sometimes **a mix of both alternating and simultaneous polyphony** is heard in one section. The best example of this is in the song "I'm Not Here For Rage I'm Here For Revenge (More Than Your Hook Up)" (Ex. 4.18). The overlap of the phrase "we can work this out" in Morrell's second track with the preceding phrase "together from this town" and the following phrase "convinced the boy inside me" in the first track is small enough that this section may be considered alternating polyphony. However, in the previous measure, the phrase "your penny thoughts of leaving" overlaps significantly with the phrase "I can still hear the sound." Similarly, in measure three, the phrase "convinced the boy inside me" overlaps with "with the last of my strength." These two instances sound more like simultaneous polyphony than alternating. Further instances of both alternating and simultaneous polyphony occur in the remainder of the example.

In "Always Depends" (Ex. 4.19), a four-measure phrase featuring simultaneous polyphony is immediately followed by a four-measure phrase of alternating polyphony. Similarly, the song "People Always Ask Me If We're Gonna Cuss In An Emery Song" (Ex.

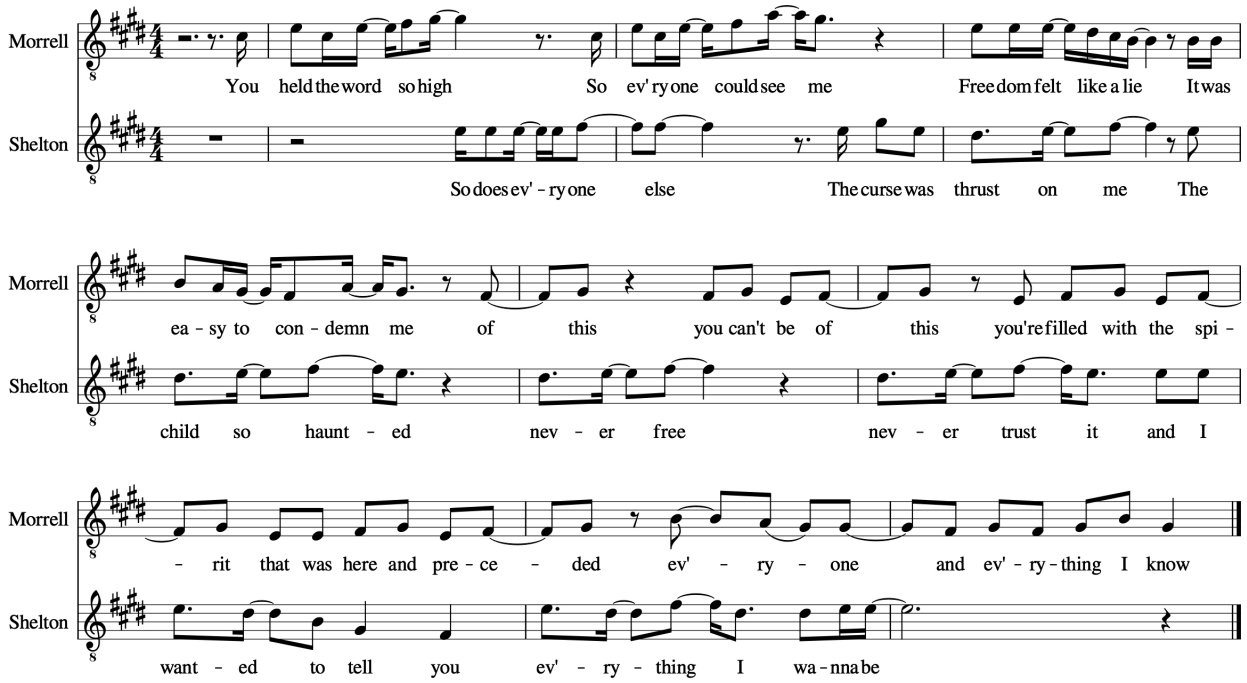
4.20) begins a section in alternating polyphony. Then, in a seemingly deceptive manner, transitions to simultaneous polyphony after only two measures of alternating.



Ex. 4.18: “I’m Not Here For Rage I’m Here For Revenge (More Than Your Hook Up)” (2011-6, 1:39). Alternating and simultaneous polyphony.

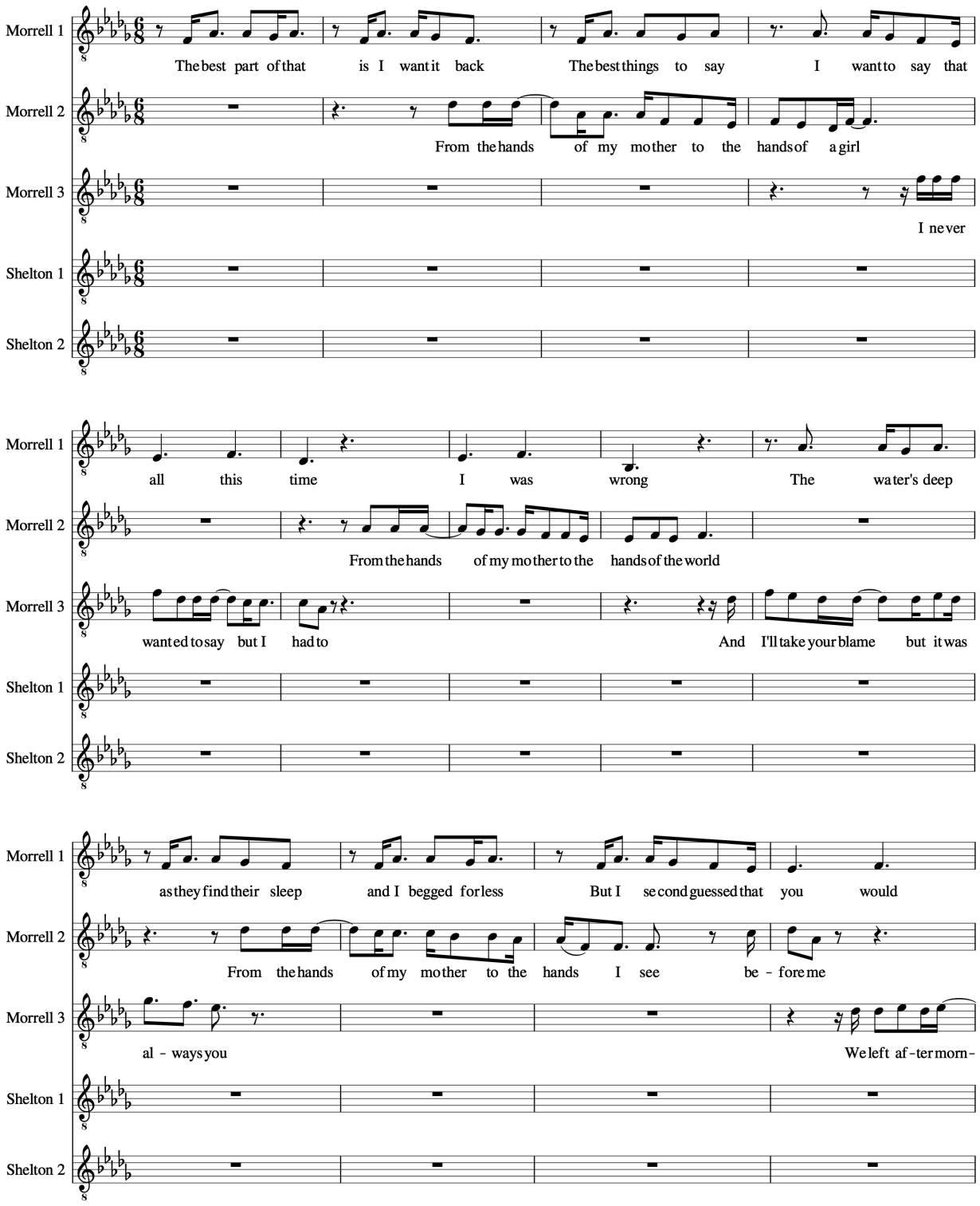


Ex. 4.19: “Always Depends” (2008-5, 0:32). Alternating and simultaneous polyphony.

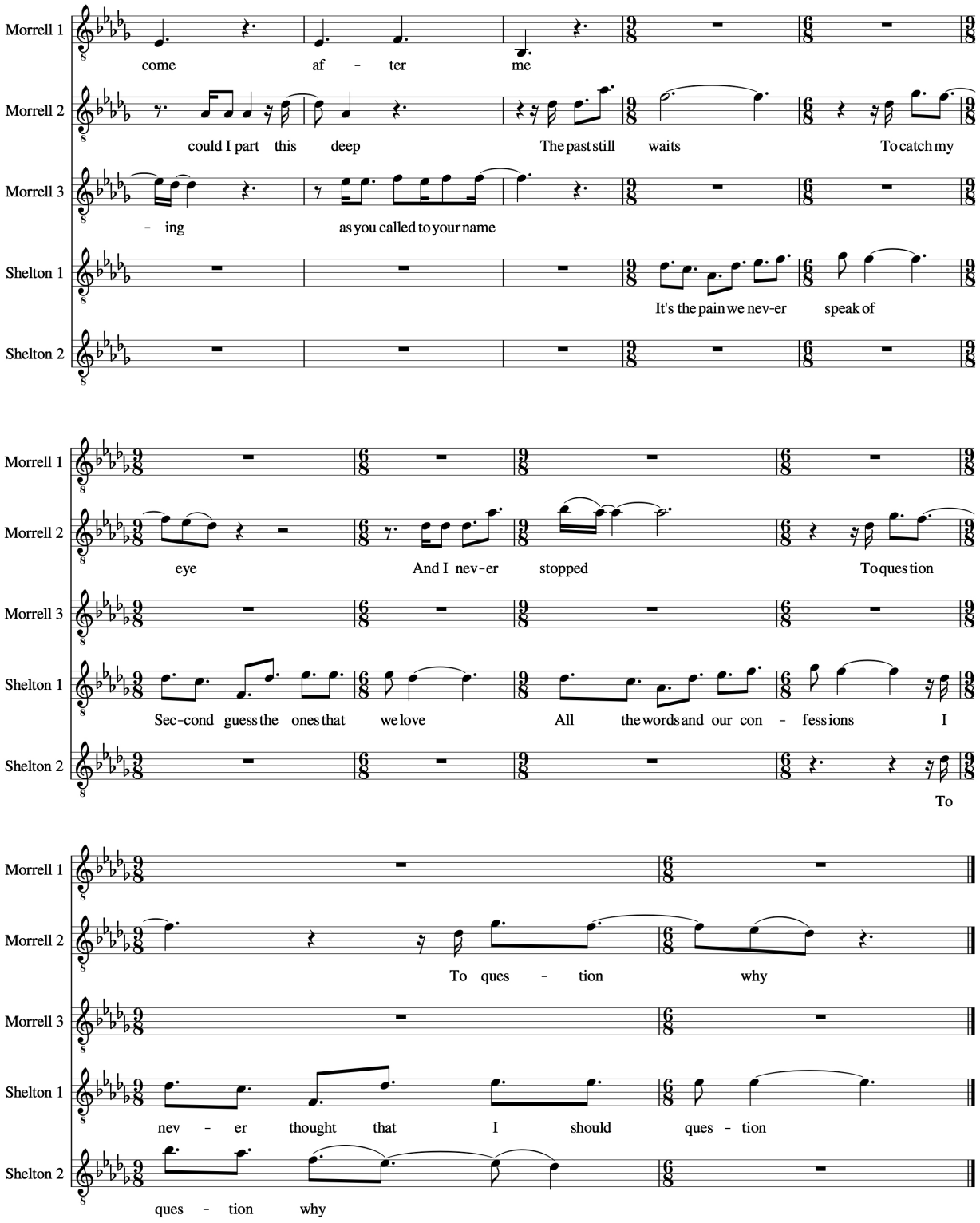


Ex. 4.20: "People Always Ask Me If We're Gonna Cuss In An Emery Song" (2018-6, 0:54). Alternating and simultaneous polyphony.

The longest instance of any form of vocal polyphony in an Emery song occurs in "Pink Slip" (Ex. 4.21). The first part of this section consists of sixteen measures of simultaneous polyphony between three tracks of just Morrell's voice. The top voice is continuous while the bottom two alternate. Therefore, while these sixteen measures qualify as simultaneous polyphony due to the continuity of the top voice, the bottom two voices, when considered separate from the top voice, qualify as alternating polyphony. After these sixteen measures, one track of Morrell's voice continues while Shelton enters. Morrell and Shelton alternate for six measures, then one track of Morrell and two tracks of Shelton build up tension with the overlapping phrases "I never thought that I should question/To question why." This tension culminates with the entrances of screaming vocals that close out the song.



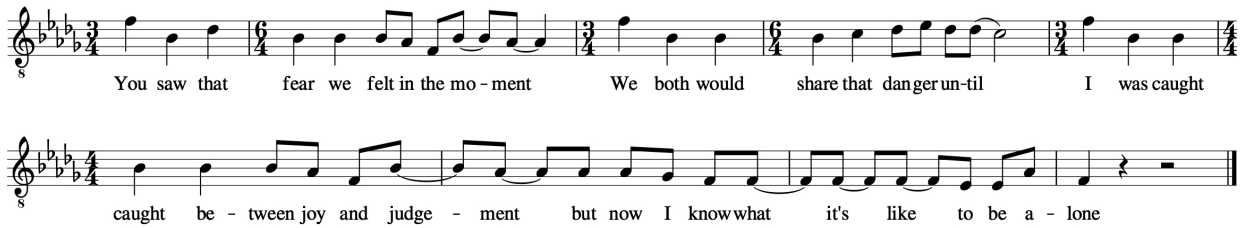
Ex. 4.21: “Pink Slip” (2015-6, 2:06). The longest instance in Emery’s music where both alternating and simultaneous polyphony occur.


Morrell 1
come af - ter me
Morrell 2
could I part this deep The past still waits To catch my
Morrell 3
- ing as you called to your name
Shelton 1
It's the pain we nev-er speak of
Shelton 2
Morrell 1
Morrell 2
eye And I nev-er stopped To ques tion
Morrell 3
Shelton 1
Sec-cond guess the ones that we love All the words and our con - fess ions I
Shelton 2
To
Morrell 1
Morrell 2
To ques - tion why
Morrell 3
Shelton 1
nev - er thought that I should ques - tion
Shelton 2
ques - tion why

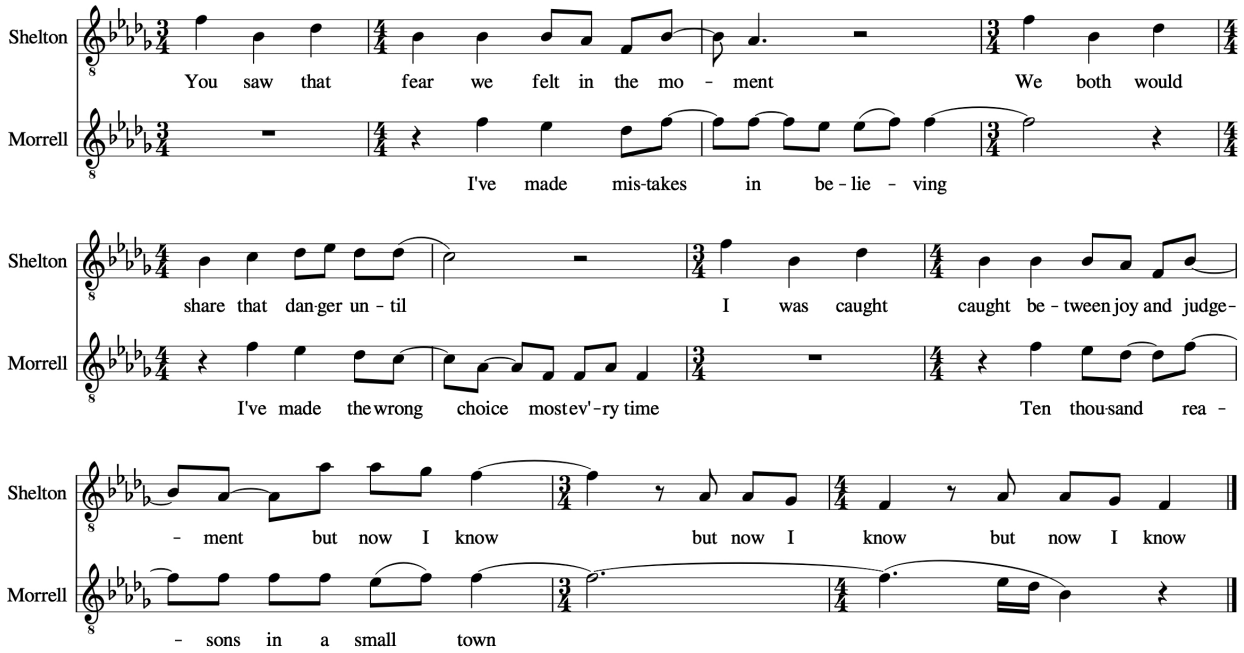
Ex. 4.21 cont.

Vocal Polyphony and Meter

There is one instance in Emery's music where the addition of a vocal line and therefore the creation of vocal polyphony requires a change in meter between two of the same sections of the song. In "2007 Clarksville High Volleyball State Champs Gay is OK," the chorus is first presented at 0:44 (Ex. 4.22) as one main vocal line by Morrell. I have chosen this mixed meter of 3/4 and 6/4 because I hear each 3/4 measure as a three-beat anacrusis into each 6/4 measure. This interpretation is supported by the strong emphasis of each beat of the 3/4 measures by the vocals, guitars, and drums. This emphasis does not appear in the 6/4 measures or the later 4/4 measures. The "stuttering" and "hesitation" in each of these 3/4 measures mirror the theme of the song, which is about someone who is afraid to express their love for another person of the same gender. The chorus appears a second time at 1:45 (Ex. 4.23), this time sung by Shelton with a new, second vocal line by Morrell, creating simultaneous polyphony. To allow for the completion of the second voice's phrase, the 6/4 measures of the first chorus are each expanded to two measures of 4/4. This progression of the song into a second, distinct chorus is reflective of the new perspective realized by the person or people portrayed in the lyrics of the song. The anxious, seemingly early jump between the 6/4 and 3/4 measures is now replaced by a more complete, relaxed, and comfortable 4/4. The phrase "but now I know what it's like to be alone" is never completed in the second chorus, simply ending at "but now I know."

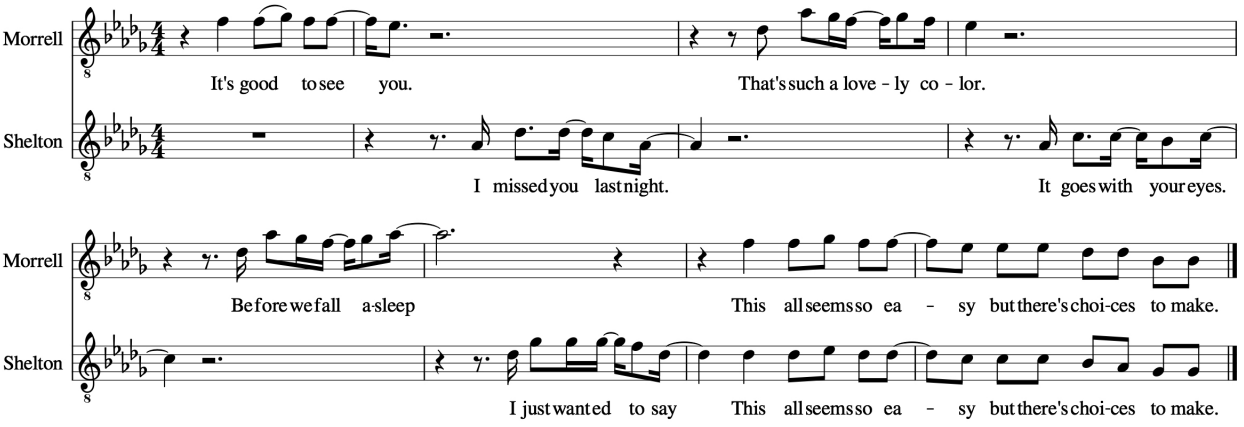


Ex. 4.22: "2007 Clarksville High Volleyball State Champs Gay Is OK" (2018-14, 0:44). This first chorus features alternating measures of 3/4 and 6/4.

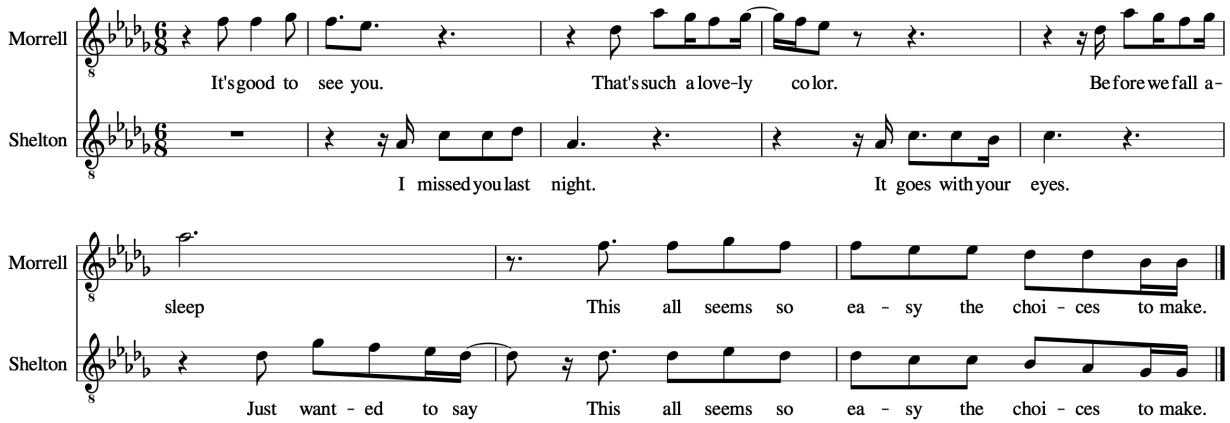


Ex. 4.23: "2007 Clarksville High Volleyball State Champs Gay Is OK" (2018-14, 1:45). This second chorus features a repeating pattern of measures in 3/4 then two measures of 4/4.

Another instance of a second chorus in a different meter than the first, but this time without the addition of vocals, occurs in the song "Fractions." The first chorus (Ex. 4.24) is in 4/4, but the second chorus (Ex. 4.25) is in 6/8. This change in meter could perhaps reflect the passage of time and the person's new outlook on the breakup described in the song.



Ex. 4.24: "Fractions" (2004), 1:02. This first chorus is in 4/4.

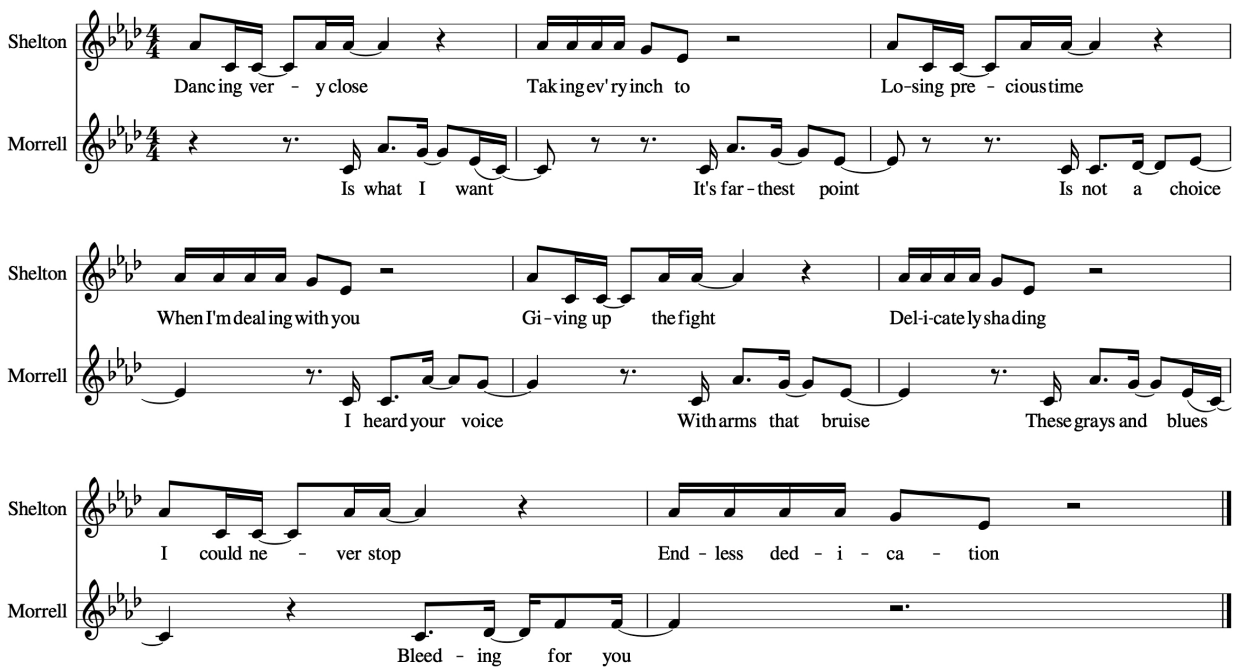


Ex. 4.25: "Fractions" (2004-5, 2:54). This second chorus is in 6/8.

Vocal Polyphony in Terminally Climactic Forms

Due to the cumulative nature of Emery's music, many of their songs end in a form section that Osborn has named the **terminal climax**. In terminally climactic song forms, "not a chorus but a single, thematically independent section placed at the end functions as the song's most memorable moment."[22] In his research, Osborn notes that Emery's songs "Walls," "The Weakest," and "In A Lose, Lose Situation" end in terminal climaxes.[23] Of these, "The Weakest" is the only one that employs vocal polyphony to create this climax (Ex. 4.26). This vocal polyphony is alternating with an overlap effect.

[22] Osborn, "Subverting the Verse-Chorus Paradigm: Terminally Climactic Forms in Recent Rock Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 35, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 23.
[23] Osborn, "Subverting the Verse-Chorus Paradigm," 44.; Osborn, "Understanding Through-Composition in Post-Rock, Math-Metal, and other Post-Millennial Rock Genres," *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (October 2011): n.p.



Ex. 4.26: "The Weakest" (2005-7, 3:03). Alternating polyphony with an overlap effect in a terminal climax.

Another example of vocal polyphony in a terminal climax occurs in "Sins of Every Father" (Ex. 4.10), which has alternating polyphony with an echo effect.

Further examples of vocal polyphony in Emery's music can be found in Appendix A. These diverse forms and patterns of vocal polyphony point to compositional complexity in music of a subgenre largely perceived as poorly composed and derivative of its secular counterparts. However, a comparison of Emery's use of vocal polyphony to that found in other subgenres may show a certain level of individuality by Emery. Though further research has yet to be undertaken to determine the validity of this hypothesis, appearances of vocal polyphony within music of other subgenres will be briefly discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter 5

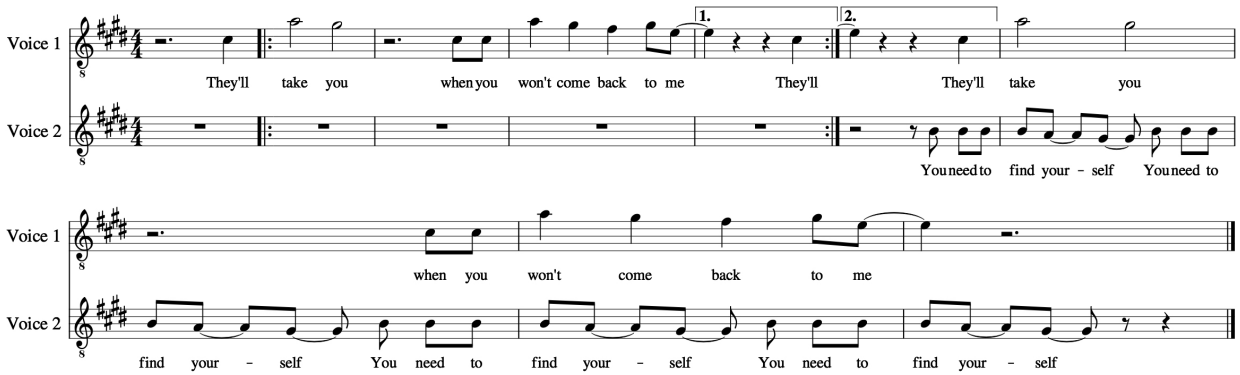
Conclusions

Further Studies in Vocal Polyphony

The same forms of vocal polyphony found in Emery's music are also found music of many other rock subgenres, including pop punk, emo, indie rock, and alternative rock. The list in Appendix B includes over two hundred examples of vocal polyphony in these subgenres and others. This list is by no means comprehensive and consists of a mix of Emery's influences and music that I listen to often. As the chart shows, Taking Back Sunday's music contains many examples of vocal polyphony and is the only band I have encountered that uses it as much as Emery, although in different ways.

In this music of other subgenres, I discovered a fourth type of simultaneous polyphony that I have named **cumulative simultaneous polyphony**. Ex. 5.1 shows an example in the song "Seventeen" by Jimmy Eat World, but many others are listed in Appendix B. This type of polyphony, like retrospective simultaneous polyphony, occurs most often towards the end of a

song. It consists of the statement and restatement of a lyrical phrase in one vocal line, with a second vocal line occurring during the restatement of the first phrase.[1]



Ex. 5.1: Jimmy Eat World, "Seventeen" (1996-5, 2:52). Cumulative simultaneous polyphony.

This evidence of vocal polyphony in music besides that of Emery demonstrates an area of popular music theory that I believe future research could expand upon. Many studies, such as those by Drew Nobile, Mark Spicer, Nicole Biamonte, Lori Burns, Christopher Doll, and others, have explored diverse methods of interpreting harmony in popular music.[2] However, I believe that my application of form to vocal polyphony uncovers patterns that, with further study, will lead to a better understanding of the subgenres discussed here. There are additional elements not explored in this thesis that should be considered in future studies. For example, in my own analysis, I did not account for non-melodic lyrical phrases, such as screaming vocals. Future analyses of vocal polyphony could consider examples containing this style of singing as well as rapping and speaking. Other factors such as lo-fi effects and volume should be considered as well. Additionally, there is opportunity for ethnographic research on how multiple vocalists

[1] Note that time markings for the examples presented in Appendix B mark where the polyphony begins. The first statement of the lyrical phrase begins prior to each time marking.

[2] Drew Nobile, "Counterpoint in Rock Music: Unpacking the 'Melodic-Harmonic Divorce,'" *Music Theory Spectrum* 37, no. 2 (2015): 189–203.; Mark Spicer, "Fragile, Emergent, and Absent Tonics in Pop and Rock Songs," *Music Theory Online* 23, no. 2 (June 2017): n.p.; Nicole Biamonte, "Triadic Modal and Pentatonic Patterns in Rock Music," *Music Theory Spectrum* 32, no. 2 (October 2010): 95–110.; Lori Burns, "Analytic Methodologies for Rock Music: Harmonic and Voice-Leading Strategies in Tori Amos' 'Crucify,'" in *Expression in Pop-Rock Music: Critical and Analytical Essays*, ed. Walter Everett, (New York: Routledge, 2008), 63–92.; Christopher Doll, *Hearing Harmony: Toward a Tonal Theory for the Rock Era* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2017).

change elements of live performance. For example, The Real Zebos' music often relies on both vocalists to create comedic alternating conversational effects, which is all the more present in their live performances. In summary, a formal approach to vocal polyphony, in addition to studies in harmony and counterpoint, is one that will be fruitful to the study of popular music.

Christian Rock Musicology

As discussed in the Review of Literature in Chapter 1, little research on Christian rock exists within the field of musicology. Most studies on the subject are by sociologists, historians, and journalists, and are intermingled with historical accounts of the Jesus People Movement and other cultural phenomena. Literature exclusively on the subject of Christian rock and CCM contain many factual errors and oversights.

Part of the reason that there are so few musicological studies on Christian rock may be related to the stereotypes discussed in Chapter 1. A stigma against Christian rock for its lack of sincerity is in some ways related to the question of authenticity in rock music. This antiquated understanding that some rock music is superior due to perceived authenticity limits opportunity for musicological research. However, the study of authenticity in Christian rock and CCM as perceived by musicians, producers, and consumers of the subgenre may lead to worthwhile study. Authenticity and sincerity are primary motivation behind artistic choices in composition of all three categories of CCM proposed by Howard and Streck discussed in Chapter 3.

More detailed research than that presented in this thesis could reveal more about the historical narrative of Christian rock. For example, the existence of spirit-filled hardcore, mentioned in Chapter 2, possibly points to an origin of Christian rock that does not have roots in the Jesus People Movement. Further research in spirit-filled hardcore, its relation to straight edge

hardcore punk, and its influence on later Christian rock musicians may prove worthwhile. A perceived lack of authenticity in Christian rock should not impede upon valuable contributions to music research and the field of musicology. Further research on the subject may lead to new insights about rock, American culture, and the interplay between consumption, artistry, and faith.

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Appendix A: Vocal Polyphony in Emery's Music

Album	Year	Song	Time	Form	Effect/Type
The Weak's End	2004	Walls	1:11	alternating	hocketing
			2:33	simultaneous	complimentary (canon)
		The Ponytail Parades	1:45	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:18	simultaneous	contrasting
			3:16	simultaneous	contrasting
		Disguising Mistakes With Goodbyes	2:22	mix	overlap, contrasting
		Fractions	0:12	simultaneous	complimentary
			1:02	alternating	simple
			1:40	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:54	alternating	simple
			3:14	alternating	simple
		Bloodless	0:10	alternating	overlap
			0:46	alternating	quickening
			1:02, 2:27	alternating	echo/simple
		Under Serious Attack	1:45	mix	echo/simple, contrasting
The Question	2005	So Cold I Could See My Breath	0:53, 1:46, 2:32	simultaneous	complimentary
			1:35	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:53	alternating	echo
		Playing With Fire	1:14	alternating	echo
			2:37	simultaneous	contrasting
		Left With Alibis and Lying Eyes	0:58, 1:55	alternating	conversational
		Listening to Freddie Mercury	0:11	simultaneous	contrasting
		The Weakest	0:01, 1:05	alternating	overlap
			1:39, 2:27	simultaneous	contrasting
			3:05	alternating	overlap
		Miss Behavin'	1:01	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:30	alternating	echo
			1:48	simultaneous	complimentary
			2:20	simultaneous	complimentary (canon)
		The Terrible Secret	2:40	simultaneous	contrasting
		In A Lose, Lose Situation	2:02	simultaneous	contrasting
			0:51, 1:46	alternating	echo
I'm Only A Man (Bonus Track Version)	2007	The Party Song	0:23, 2:40	alternating	echo
			1:30	alternating	simple
			1:40	alternating	echo
		After The Devil Beats His Wife	0:53, 1:53	alternating	simple
		Whoa! Man	0:36, 1:53	alternating	overlap
While Broken Hearts Prevail	2008	Say The Things (You Want)	0:45, 1:27, 2:36	alternating	simple
			1:49	alternating	simple
		Ten Talents	0:38, 1:45	alternating	echo

While Broken Hearts Prevail	2008	Ten Talents	2:27	mix	simple/overlap, retrospective, echo
		Always Depends	0:32	mix	contrasting, sustained hocketing
			1:05	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:27	simultaneous	contrasting
		Do The Things (You Want)	2:09	simultaneous	contrasting
…In Shallow Seas We Sail	2009	Cutthroat Collapse	0:25, 1:17	alternating	simple
			0:47, 1:38	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:24	alternating	simple
			2:48	alternating	quickening
		Curbside Goodbye	0:54, 1:45	alternating	simple
		Inside Our Skin	0:32, 1:13	alternating	simple
			0:48	alternating	echo
			1:32	simultaneous	complimentary
			2:27	alternating	simple
		Churches And Serial Killers	0:27	alternating	overlap
			1:00, 1:44	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:27	alternating	overlap
		Butcher's Mouth	0:17, 1:10	alternating	simple
			0:38, 1:26	alternating	hocketing
		In Shallow Seas We Sail	0:24, 1:14	simultaneous	complimentary
			0:46	alternating	echo
			2:14	simultaneous	contrasting
		The Poor And The Prevalent	0:01	simultaneous	contrasting
			0:43, 1:30, 2:34	mix	overlap, contrasting
			1:59	simultaneous	contrasting
		A Sin To Hold On To	1:14, 2:16	alternating	simple/echo
		Piggy Bank Lies	0:14, 1:13	alternating	self-overlap
			2:20	simultaneous	contrasting
		Dear Death Part 2	0:44, 1:28	alternating	overlap
		Closed Eyes, Open Hands	1:05	alternating	overlap
We Do What We Want (Deluxe Edition)	2011	The Cheval Glass	1:37	alternating	simple
		Scissors	0:58, 2:14	alternating	echo
			1:30	alternating	simple/echo
			1:53	alternating	echo
		The Anchors	0:30, 0:48	alternating	simple
			1:02, 3:16	alternating	echo
		The Curse Of Perfect Days	1:49, 3:58	alternating	echo
			2:41	alternating	simple
			3:12	alternating	echo
		You Wanted It	0:34	alternating	simple
			2:40	simultaneous	contrasting
		I'm Not Here For Rage I'm Here For Revenge (More Than Your Hook Up)	0:36, 1:39	mix	overlap, contrasting
		Addicted To Bad Decisions	0:20	alternating	simple
			2:52	simultaneous	contrasting
		Crumbling	0:25	alternating	simple

We Do What We Want (Delux Edition)	2011	Crumbling	1:37	alternating	simple
You Were Never Alone	2015	Rock, Pebble, Stone	0:23	alternating	overlap
			3:28	simultaneous	complimentary (canon)
		Hard Times	0:11, 1:39	alternating	simple
			0:25	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:03, 1:23, 2:07, 2:23, 3:25	alternating	echo
		The Beginning	2:27	simultaneous	contrasting
		The Less You Say	2:16	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:47	alternating	echo/simple
		Pink Slip	1:30	alternating	simple
			2:06	mix	contrasting, simple
		To the Deep	2:37	simultaneous	contrasting
		What's Stopping You	0:13	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:07	simultaneous	contrasting
			3:08	alternating	overlap
		Alone	0:37	simultaneous	contrasting
Eve	2018	Is This The Real Life	2:00	mix	overlap, contrasting
		Fear Yourself	1:01	alternating	simple
		Jesus Wept	0:41	simultaneous	contrasting
		Safe	1:38	alternating	simple
		Young Boy's Dream	0:18	alternating	simple
		People Always Ask Me If We're Gonna Cuss in an Emery Song	0:54	mix	overlap, contrasting
			2:19	simultaneous	complimentary
		Streets of Gold	2:53	alternating	echo
		Name Your God	0:23	alternating	quickening
			0:41, 1:37	alternating	echo/overlap
		Shame	0:47	alternating	simple
			0:57, 1:39	simultaneous	contrasting
		Everything That She Offered Me	0:01, 1:07, 2:30	alternating	simple
			0:46	alternating	echo
		See You on the Other Side	2:22	alternating	simple
		2007 Clarksville High Volleyball State Champs Gay Is OK	1:45	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:15	alternating	simple
		Sins of Every Father	0:39, 1:32	alternating	simple
			2:04	mix	echo/simple, contrasting

Appendix B: Selected Examples of Vocal Polyphony in Contemporary Rock

Artist/Band	Song	Year	Time	Form	Effect/Type
Anberlin	The Feel Good Drag	2005	0:16, 0:39, 1:04, 1:24, 2:23	alternating	self-overlap
Angels & Airwaves	The Adventure	2006	3:34	simultaneous	complementary
	A Little's Enough	2006	3:55	simultaneous	retrospective
	Rite of Spring	2007	3:54	simultaneous	complementary
	Crawl	2011	3:13	simultaneous	retrospective
	Overload	2016	0:33, 1:33	alternating	simple
Arctic Monkeys	Fluorescent Adolescent	2007	2:29	simultaneous	retrospective
Belmont	Albert	2018	0:39, 1:19	alternating	simple
			2:12	simultaneous	retrospective
The Blackout	Save Ourselves (The Warning)	2009	0:30, 1:19	simultaneous	complementary
blink-182	All the Small Things	1999	2:22	simultaneous	cumulative/ retrospective
	Love Is Dangerous	2011	2:09, 3:15	alternating	overlap
Brand New	Sic Transit Gloria…Glory Fades	2003	0:10, 1:09	alternating	simple
			0:43, 1:43	simultaneous	contrasting
Brandtson	As You Wish	1999	2:55	mix	simple, contrasting
	12th and Middle	2000	2:31	simultaneous	contrasting/ complementary
	Leaving Ohio	2000	3:18	alternating	overlap
	Boys Lie	2000	3:00	mix	overlap, contrasting
	Grace Thinks I'm A Failure	2000	2:51	simultaneous	cumulative
			3:35	simultaneous	contrasting
	With Friends Like You	2002	1:46	alternating	echo
			3:12	simultaneous	contrasting
	Command Q, Command Z	2002	2:44	simultaneous	retrospective
	Fireworks and Phonecalls	2002	2:38	simultaneous	contrasting
Citizen	World	2017	2:29	simultaneous	contrasting
Coheed and Cambria	The Crowing	2003	5:40	simultaneous	complementary/ contrasting
Cute Is What We Aim For	The Curse Of Curves	2006	1:45, 2:50	simultaneous	complementary
Faintheart	Heavy Lifting	2018	2:29	simultaneous	complementary
	Chainbreaker	2018	0:44, 1:51	mix	complementary, simple
Fall Out Boy	Sugar We're Going Down	2005	2:49	simultaneous	complementary
			3:02	alternating	echo
			3:12	simultaneous	cumulative
Four Year Strong	Prepare to Be Digitally Manipulated	2007	0:20, 1:10	alternating	overlap
	Abandon Ship or Abandon All Hope	2007	0:25, 1:30	alternating	simple
			2:40	alternating	echo
	Heroes Get Remembered, Legends Never Die	2007	0:45	alternating	overlap
			1:33	simultaneous	complementary

Four Year Strong	Wrecked 'Em? Damn Near Killed 'Em	2007	0:19, 1:19	alternating	simple
	Men Are From Mars, Women Are From Hell	2007	0:33, 2:05	alternating	simple/overlap
Further Seems Forever	The Moon Is Down	2001	0:37, 1:47, 2:26	alternating	echo
The Get Up Kids	Valentine	1999	3:23	simultaneous	cumulative
Hot Mulligan	Dary	2017	1:00	alternating	overlap
	All You Wanted By Michelle Branch	2018	0:33, 1:56, 2:51	alternating	simple
	I Hate The Gooey Disk	2018	1:36	alternating	simple
	The Soundtrack To Missing A Slam Dunk	2018	0:01, 0:50, 1:55, 2:08, 2:59	alternating	simple
Jimmy Eat World	Claire	1996	3:06	simultaneous	contrasting
	Call It In The Air	1996	0:26, 1:15	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:14	simultaneous	cumulative
	Seventeen	1996	3:05	simultaneous	cumulative
	Digits	1996	3:45	simultaneous	cumulative
	Table for Glasses	1999	3:14	simultaneous	cumulative
	Blister	1999	2:03	simultaneous	cumulative
The Juliana Theory	Music Box Superhero	1999	3:23	simultaneous	complementary
	This is the End of Your Life	2001	1:35, 2:42	alternating	echo
Mae	Embers and Envelopes	2003	3:34	simultaneous	retrospective
Man Overboard	Borderline	2015	2:06	simultaneous	cumulative
Mayday Parade	Never Sure	2018	2:35	simultaneous	cumulative
			3:16	alternating	echo
Modern Baseball	Hours Outside in the Snow	2012	2:44	simultaneous	retrospective
MxPx	Move to Bremerton	1996	0:49, 2:04, 3:08, 3:40	simultaneous	complementary
Panic! At The Disco	Build God, Then We'll Talk	2005	2:06, 3:06	alternating	self-overlap
The Real Zebos	Rock Star Skinny	2016	3:17	simultaneous	retrospective
	My Every Breath	2016	0:48	mix	simple, complementary
	Get Down	2016	1:04, 2:10	alternating	echo
			3:00	simultaneous	cumulative
	Luck	2019	2:21	simultaneous	cumulative/ retrospective
Saosin	Seven Years	2003	1:22	alternating	echo
			2:24	simultaneous	contrasting
Save Your Breath	Stay Young	2011	1:31	alternating	echo
			2:46	alternating	overlap
Saves the Day	All-Star Me	1999	1:15	simultaneous	retrospective
Senses Fail	Can't Be Saved	2006	1:48	alternating	simple
			2:39	simultaneous	retrospective
Simple Creatures	Lucy	2019	0:09, 1:17	alternating	simple
State Champs	Hard to Please	2013	0:53	alternating	echo
			2:33	simultaneous	cumulative
Sum 41	Handle This	2001	3:04	simultaneous	retrospective
	Fat Lip	2001	0:18, 0:58	alternating	simple
	No Brains	2002	1:58	simultaneous	contrasting
	Thanks For Nothing	2002	0:38, 1:25, 2:11	alternating	echo

Sunny Day Real Estate	8	1994	2:55, 4:20	simultaneous	contrasting/ complementary
	9	1994	3:25, 5:11	simultaneous	contrasting
	One	2000	3:30	simultaneous	cumulative
Taking Back Sunday	You Know How I Do	2002	0:35, 1:27	alternating	overlap
			2:06	simultaneous	retrospective
	Cute Without the E (Cut from the Team)	2002	0:19, 1:08	alternating	overlap
			1:37	simultaneous	cumulative
			2:18	simultaneous	cumulative
			2:59	simultaneous	cumulative
	There's No I in Team	2002	0:16, 1:25	alternating	simple
			2:23	simultaneous	contrasting
	Great Romances of the 20th Century	2002	0:31	alternating	echo
			1:09	simultaneous	complementary
			1:33	simultaneous	cumulative
			1:45	alternating	overlap
			2:24	alternating	simple
			3:15	simultaneous	cumulative
	Ghost Man on Third	2002	0:55, 2:25	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:18, 2:36	alternating	echo
	Timberwolves at New Jersey	2002	0:31, 1:25	alternating	echo
			2:50	simultaneous	contrasting
	The Blue Channel	2002	0:33, 1:14	alternating	echo
	You're So Last Summer	2002	0:37, 1:27	alternating	echo
			0:40, 1:49	simultaneous	complementary
			2:16	simultaneous	contrasting
	Head Club	2002	0:19	alternating	simple
			1:04	simultaneous	complementary
			1:37	simultaneous	contrasting
	Set Phasers to Stun	2004	0:16, 1:02	simultaneous	complementary
			0:23, 1:09	alternating	simple
			0:49, 1:35	alternating	echo
			2:27	mix	contrasting/ complementary, simple
	Bonus Mosh Pt. II	2004	0:08, 0:46	alternating	simple
			0:28, 1:06	alternating	echo/simple
			1:22	alternating	simple
			1:51	simultaneous	contrasting
			2:24	mix	echo/overlap, contrasting
	A Decade Under the Influence	2004	0:11, 0:54	alternating	overlap
			0:36, 1:19	alternating	overlap
			2:22	simultaneous	retrospective
			3:06	simultaneous	contrasting
	This Photograph is Proof (I Know You Know)	2004	0:17	alternating	simple
			0:49, 1:53	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:03, 2:07, 3:24	simultaneous	complementary

Taking Back Sunday	The Union	2004	0:05	mix	simple, contrasting
			1:10	simultaneous	contrasting
			1:32, 2:15	alternating	simple
	New American Classic	2004	1:15	alternating	self-overlap
			3:26	alternating	echo
	I Am Fred Astaire	2004	0:16, 0:49, 1:56	alternating	simple
			1:22, 2:29	alternating	overlap
	One-Eighty By Summer	2004	0:17	simultaneous	cumulative
			0:30, 1:21	alternating	simple
			0:44, 1:33	simultaneous	complementary (canon)
			1:07	alternating	overlap
			2:37	simultaneous	cumulative
	Number Five With A Bullet	2004	0:52, 1:46, 2:53	alternating	conversational
			1:06	alternating	simple
			1:33	alternating	echo
			2:39, 3:07	simultaneous	retrospective
	Little Devotional	2004	1:32, 2:12	simultaneous	contrasting
	…Slowdance On The Inside	2004	1:04, 2:19	alternating	echo/overlap
			1:54	simultaneous	contrasting
			3:17	simultaneous	cumulative
	What's It Feel Like to Be a Ghost?	2006	0:25, 0:46, 1:29	alternating	echo
			0:37, 1:22	alternating	overlap
			0:50, 1:41, 3:12	alternating	simple/overlap
	Liar (It Takes One To Know One)	2006	0:25, 0:46, 1:21, 1:42, 2:25	alternating	echo/overlap
	MakeDamnSure	2006	0:32, 1:26, 2:44	alternating	overlap
	Up Against (Blackout)	2006	0:39, 1:45	alternating	echo
			2:09	simultaneous	complementary
	My Blue Heaven	2006	0:07, 1:16	alternating	simple
			0:54, 1:35, 2:03, 2:16, 3:40	alternating	echo
			3:13	simultaneous	complementary
	Twenty-Twenty Surgery	2006	0:19, 0:46, 1:36	alternating	echo
	Spin	2006	0:28, 0:44, 1:20, 1:37, 2:55	alternating	echo
	Miami	2006	0:48, 1:38, 2:21, 2:52	alternating	echo
			2:34	simultaneous	cumulative
	I'll Let You Live	2006	0:40, 1:17, 2:28	alternating	simple
			1:35, 2:01, 2:46, 3:04	alternating	echo

Taking Back Sunday	Brooklyn (If You See Something, Say Something)	2006	1:11, 2:29, 3:15, 3:37	simultaneous	complementary (canon)
	Sleep	2006	0:33, 1:24	alternating	echo
			0:44, 1:35	simultaneous	contrasting
			0:53, 1:45, 2:23	simultaneous	complementary
	New Again	2009	0:39, 1:08, 1:37, 1:49, 2:26, 2:39, 2:45, 3:04, 3:16, 3:23	alternating	echo
			1:25	alternating	simple
	Sink Into Me	2009	0:31, 1:25, 2:36	alternating	overlap
	Lonely, Lonely	2009	0:41, 1:24, 2:13	alternating	overlap
	Swing	2009	0:12, 0:45, 1:42	alternating	simple
			1:03, 1:20, 1:56, 2:45, 3:02	alternating	echo
	Where My Mouth Is	2009	1:20, 1:59	alternating	echo
			2:52	mix	contrasting, overlap
	Cut Me Up Jenny	2009	3:20	alternating	echo
	Catholic Knees	2009	0:26, 1:17, 1:57, 2:09	alternating	simple
			0:41, 1:24, 1:38, 2:29	alternating	echo
	Capital M-E	2009	1:08	alternating	overlap
			1:39	alternating	echo
	Carpathia	2009	0:11	alternating	simple
			0:24, 1:04, 1:19, 2:29	alternating	echo
			1:57	simultaneous	cumulative
	El Paso	2011	0:55	mix	contrasting, echo
			1:29	alternating	simple
	Faith (When I Let You Down)	2011	1:08	alternating	echo/simple
	Best Places To Be A Mom	2011	0:14, 0:25	alternating	echo
			1:08	mix	complementary, echo
	Who Are You Anyway?	2011	0:31, 1:35	alternating	simple
			0:48, 1:00, 1:06, 1:52, 2:04, 2:45, 2:57, 3:03, 3:09, 3:20	alternating	echo
	This Is All Now	2011	0:57, 2:04, 2:59	alternating	hocketing
			2:16	alternating	simple
			3:11	simultaneous	complementary
			3:24	alternating	overlap

Taking Back Sunday	It Doesn't Feel A Thing Like Falling	2011	0:48, 1:31, 1:43, 2:38, 2:51, 3:03	alternating	echo
	Since You're Gone	2011	1:31, 2:30	alternating	simple
	You Got Me	2011	0:33, 1:08	simultaneous	complementary
	Call Me In The Morning	2011	2:06	alternating	echo
	Flicker, Fade	2015	2:52	alternating	simple
	Stood A Chance	2015	0:44, 1:26, 1:36, 2:52	alternating	simple
	All The Way	2015	1:00	alternating	simple
	Beat Up Car	2015	1:24	alternating	echo
			3:00	alternating	overlap
	It Takes More	2015	0:39, 1:38, 2:53	alternating	overlap/simple
			3:17	simultaneous	cumulative
	They Don't Have Any Friends	2015	0:02, 1:05	alternating	simple/echo
	Better Homes And Gardens	2015	2:07, 3:16	alternating	overlap
			3:29	simultaneous	contrasting
	Like You Do	2015	1:56	alternating	echo
	We Were Younger Then	2015	0:24, 1:06, 1:46	alternating	simple
			3:03	alternating	echo
			3:58	simultaneous	complementary
	How I Met Your Mother	2015	2:07, 2:40	simultaneous	contrasting
	This Is Happening	2015	0:29, 3:15	alternating	echo
			1:16, 2:25	alternating	overlap
	Can You Feel That (Here I Am)	2015	1:22	alternating	overlap
	Death Wolf	2016	1:08, 2:06	alternating	simple
	You Can't Look Back	2016	3:38	simultaneous	cumulative
	All Excess	2016	0:27, 1:10	alternating	echo
	I Felt It Too	2016	4:16	simultaneous	contrasting
	Call Come Running	2016	2:25	simultaneous	contrasting
	Holy Water	2016	3:16	simultaneous	cumulative
	In The Middle Of It All	2016	2:50	alternating	simple
	Homecoming	2016	2:03, 3:16	alternating	echo
Tally Hall	Good Day	2005	0:14	simultaneous	complementary
			3:02	simultaneous	cumulative
	Spring and a Storm	2005	3:34	simultaneous	cumulative
	Two Wuv	2005	3:02	simultaneous	cumulative
	Ruler of Everything	2005	0:57	alternating	simple
	Turn the Lights Off	2011	0:52, 1:38	simultaneous	cumulative
			2:03	simultaneous	contrasting
Tame Impala	New Person, Same Old Mistakes	2015	1:22, 2:38	mix	conversational, contrasting
WSTR	Eastbound & Down	2017	3:02	simultaneous	retrospective